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SCRIBNER'S MAGAZINE

December 1930

VOL. LXXXVIII NO. 6

LESBY

BY ELIZABETH WILLIS

The fifth of the complete short novels selected from 1,672 manuscripts in the $5,000 Prize Contest. The story of a powerful and able woman who ruled her father's farm. The narrative is alive with drama, the people full of human warmth and character.

JOHN CROY drove homeward from the station at sundown, his horses at a slow walk. The brown Percherons always moved slowly. They were heavy-footed, broad-haunched—as fine a pair of workers as any in the province, perhaps in all Canada. But they belonged in the field—in the hay-field, drawing in hay from sunrise to dusk. Loads of it they brought slowly over the stubble into the great barn. They were not used to the long, hard road up from Niss'pong. Ten miles of it there was—hard going. They moved slowly with the reins lying loose on their broad backs, while the man in the slanting seat of the old democrat sat humped over with his chin on his chest, his thoughts on Norm. For Norm had gone. John Croy's heart was heavy. He had no more sons to help him. Norm had been the last to go—the eldest of them all.

By the time John Croy's wife had given to the world seven children, besides doing a man's work on the farm, she had grown bent of back and thick of waist and dragged a weary heel; and feeling she had done her share for Canada and the Mother Country, she took to her bed and died.

Of the seven children which John had left to him, the first five were boys. Each in turn had packed his bag and saying farewell to their father and the farm, had crossed the border into the States, where money was more plentiful and not so hard to get. Norm had held out until Lesby was twenty-three. By that time he was on the verge of forty. And as John watched Norm go, nearly all the hope in his tired, wistful gray eyes died out—not entirely all, for Norm had said he would come back.

So John was left with four hundred acres of farm land, five horses—one of which, old Moll, was blind—six milch cows, two heifer calves, four young steers, and a sow with a litter of eight. . . . Then, there was Lesby. And when John thought of his daughter Lesby, as

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big and husky as the best of the five who had deserted him, some of the energy and determination returned to him; and unhitching Bob and Bet from the democrat, he fed them in their stalls and returned to the barn door to look at the western sky. The sun was down, but there was a good hour of daylight left; and calling to Lesby within the barn to follow when she had swilled the hogs, he set out with both pitchforks in the direction of the field where the hay had been cut and lying two days.

Lesby caught up with him before he had gone half-way. She was stuffing her coarse brown shirt down into her trousers as she came. Deep-bosomed, wide-hipped, built for service, Lesby strode at her father's side, crushing the short stubble under her heavy boots, her broad shoulders rising several inches above John's stooped ones, her handsome eyes now scanning the sky for a cloud that might mean rain to harm the cut hay, now coming to earth to sweep a distant stretch of fall wheat for a sign of dock or milkweed.

"Bet kicked over the traces agin an' skun her heels." John's voice was almost a whimper, for his mind was still on Norm and his long ride back alone from the station. "One them tail flies got on her rump like, an' I clapped at un with my hat."

"That was a fool trick," rejoined Lesby. "The next time it'll be worse'n skun heels for both youse. She most got Norm thataway onct. You'd best be careful like. She's mighty free with them heels."

John had heard nothing beyond the mention of Norm. "Don't seem like he's went, Lesby. Seem like we'll see un over in the field there when we get to it. Don't see how we can do without un."

"We'll do. We'll get Nate the Wanderer over once'n a while. We'll do."

"I ain't so young, Lesby. I felt it comin' back just now. I felt I was gettin' old. An' four hundred acres is a lot o' land. . . . It's queer that outen all of youse, youse is the only one that's stuck."

"Yas," said Lesby. They had reached the fence and she took the two pitchforks from John's hand and hitched up her trousers a bit before straddling the top rail into the next field.

The two had forgotten Anne. She was seldom in their thoughts. In important matters she did not count. Anne did not mind. She was glad to be let alone to do as she wished. From the bank of the creek in the cherry thicket, she lay watching the two cross the sloping stubble. She saw them climb the rail fence, Lesby with an easy swing of her strong body, John laboriously and with painful care.

Her dark eyes followed them, a faint smile of pity on her thin, soft lips. To work, to eat, to sleep—like the cattle in the field. They took no time to read, no time to think. They did not hear the music of the chattering birds nor see the colors in the maple grove. Life to them was measured by the loads of hay dried in, the acres plowed, the grain threshed, the amount of butter fat to the gallon of milk, the sow's last litter. But there was more than that to life—much more, thought Anne. There was beauty—and love. She pressed her slim, frail body closer against the sweet earth.

Those worked who was willin', she thought. Lesby worked like a plow-horse because she had the strength of one. As long as she bent her back to the load, more would be piled onto her. She was like the old mare Moll who had pulled more than her share of the load and had drawed herself blind in harness and now wandered about in pastures where it was always night.

With the back of a hand propping a small, pointed chin, Anne lay watching

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the two as they entered the sloping field where the drying hay lay waiting to be coiled. Each started at the end of two separate windrows and set to work to toss the cut hay into stacks shoulder high. Although Anne was aware of the two figures in the dimming field, she saw only Lesby. Just so the men who were hunting for a woman to marry saw only Lesby. And once seeing Lesby, their eyes never came down the half-dozen inches to the height of an ordinary woman—for by the side of Lesby all other women looked ordinary.

Anne turned over on her back and looked up at the reddening sky, for Lesby had passed out of her range of vision; and with the passing of Lesby, the distant field no longer held any interest. A meadow-lark called from the near-by pasture; and Anne lay for a time listening, feeling the earth under her breathe like a sleeping woman.

When she came out into the open the sun had set. It had left a red tinge over the land. Her father and Lesby were not in sight; but the sloping field where they had been at work was covered with long lines of finished coils gleaming a paler green against the cropped field.

She climbed the last fence with the blooms of chicory and wild carrot in her arms and crossed the dusk-filled pasture to the house. Her father was dousing his face at the wash-bench inside the lean-to and did not raise his head as she passed. Lesby's deep-throated boom met her as she entered the kitchen:

"No fire started. No potatoes peeled. The table not set. Youse is a fine housekeeper. I can't work in the field all day an' do housework too." Although she had scolded, her voice had a good-natured thread running through it. . . . "Here—don't bring them things in here, you silly-billy. That wild carrot's a nuisance an' that chicry'll take the hull place onct it gets a start. . . . Chuck un in the stove here."

"No, Lesby——"

"Have un here. They'll go to seed an' blow all over the place. They's worse'n mustard. Sling un in."

The smoke belched up from the newly made fire as Lesby lifted the lid, and Anne laid the blue and white blooms in the extended hand and turned her back on what followed. She heard the lid slam down. It was like the shutting of a coffin.

"Get a hustle on you, now. My back's about busted. I dried in four loads while Pa was in town seein' Norm off."

John had entered from the lean-to and stood fumbling for the comb in the rack below the mirror by the door.

"Seem like Lesby's got her hands full thout havin' to do housework too," he murmured. "An' the cows got to be milked yet an' the sep'ratin' done. Where was you?" He had found the bit of comb and was laying his scant gray hair in wet fine streaks across his head. "Over to the swamp agin? Them loggers warned youse to keep out. You'll get stuck in one them bogs up to your neck some day an' holler yerself blind an' nobody to hear you with that sawmill makin' all that racket. That heifer calf of Jeffrey's that went down in there two year ago they never found hide ner hair of, you remember. . . . I wish they'd dreen that swamp, Lesby."

Anne had placed the round pewter caster with its oil and vinegar cruets in the centre of the table where she had hoped to see the chicory and wild carrot blooms, and was now laying the knives and forks with meticulous care.

"Some the wild cherries still hang on," she remarked. "The trees look beautiful—just like they're on fire."

"Yas—an' we shoulda got some jell out of un," rejoined Lesby. The potato peelings were falling away from her

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knife like shavings from a hand-plane. "Russ Milliken's man gethered gallons an' Sarah put up both jell an' preserve. We ain't got a quart for this winter."

"An' we ain't got a quart of strarbry jam put up either," complained John. He stood rubbing the small of his back, thankful that Sunday was so close at hand. "Seem like youse might do that, Anne." There was a flash from his gentle eyes as they rested on his younger daughter. "Lesby would pick un if she had time," he added reprovingly.

"The more fool me, Pa," said Lesby. "I can't bear to see work ondone. I'm like Ma was. I can't set. . . . But Pa's right about that swamp, Anne. Youse best be careful."

"I wasn't in the swamp to-day. I went up to the Rock. The black-caps were all gone. But I saw the bronze turkey again. He's handsomer'n ever—and wilder."

"Shucks!" scoffed Lesby. "You're loony about that turkey. It's nawthin' but a wild un. It's goin' to git a bullet in its head some day an' somebody's goin' to have a fine Christmas dinner thout payin' fer it."

Anne's heart missed a beat. For a moment Lesby's face swam in a mist. A bullet in its head. A fine Christmas dinner. But that couldn't happen. God wouldn't let it. It wasn't only flesh and blood and bone. It was more than that. If it died, something else would die with it—beauty—courage—honor— It simply couldn't happen. . . . Lesby's voice seemed to come from far off:

"Bring up the butter'n milk from the suller," she had said. And Anne saw clearly. Lesby was sloshing the peeled potatoes about in the water. She drained them off and carried them to the stove, where she covered them with boiling water and slapped the pot down over the open hole. "An' cut a loaf. It's too late to make biscuits. I'll have to get another ham from the smokus."

II

On Sunday afternoons two single-horse rigs and a shining black automobile—Santee's—stood near the barn and two horses were fed and watered and put into stalls by the accommodating John. Three men sat about the roomy kitchen in their Sunday clothes, their faces scraped to the blood point, their hands crimson from the scrubbing-brush. The odor of the cow-stable mingled with the smell of warm, freshly washed flesh, filling the kitchen with a healthy, invigorating smell that was toned into an enticing fragrance by Lesby's cologne.

Lesby had taken off her trousers and put on her wine-colored silk dress and her cameo pin. She had brushed her hair sleek as a birch leaf and wound it round and round her head until it looked like a gleaming crown. It made her seem taller than ever—taller than the widower Santee—and far more grand.

Anne was always vaguely troubled when she saw Lesby like this—troubled for Lesby. Milt Santee could hardly keep his hands off of her when he came in, Anne saw. She could see his eyes widen when he saw her; and whenever Lesby laughed and hunched her fine shoulders under their wine-colored silk, Milt Santee's eyes widened more than ever and the blood came up into his face. Then Anne would hold herself tight. It was a great gesture—this shoulder-hunching of Lesby's. It made Anne tingle to see her do it. And every time Walt Larrabee got a direct reply from Lesby and with it a level, smiling look that showed the flash of her wide, white teeth, Milt Santee lifted the iron stove-lid near him and spat fiercely into the hole and slammed the

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lid down again with such force that Lesby looked at him again—which was what Santee wanted, of course.

After a while John took himself off somewhere with his pipe and Anne crept noiselessly away in her soft Sunday shoes to sit on the cellar steps with a book. Here the voices from the kitchen reached her: the nasal whine of Luce Calloway which started only to be submerged by Santee's bull-like bellow. Walt Larrabee's voice Anne seldom heard. She knew that he sat there with his red, weather-beaten face, his good-natured smile, his head a little on one side, just content to look at Lesby and say nothing.

Anne hoped Lesby wouldn't take Santee. She knew that he wanted Lesby because she was big and strong and could work hard. But Lesby loved land. Santee had a section—good land, not rocky, bush-ruined stretches like some of Luce Calloway's. And Walt Larrabee had only two hundred—and half had never felt the plow. But Santee's wife was not two years dead yet. Worked to death, Anne had heard. She had declared to Lesby that she had seen Santee's wife in the field all humped over as if she ached, only two weeks before she died. At this bit of news Lesby had remarked bluntly: "A little woman like that ain't no business marryin' a farmer an' expectin' an easy time."

"But what if it's a farmer she happens to love?" Anne asked timidly.

Lesby laughed loudly. "Love ain't more'n puttin' up with. A woman can stand any man's she's a mind to."

Anne's face burned and she retreated vanquished. What did she know of love between man and woman except what she had read in books?

As the summer passed, Norm's letters continued to speak of his return at some future day, and the talk at the table between Lesby and John was of what they would do, what improvements they would make when Norm came back to the farm.

The barn needed a new roof, the smoke-house new weather-boarding, the horses new harness. Perhaps they could add to the stock. If they did, that would mean a new silo. That was almost more than they dared hope—a silo. Still—Norm had got a good job in Detroit. He was one to save.

At the table the talk was of little else but Norm's return. Anne listened in silence. She wondered at their blindness, at their childlike faith. She knew that Norm would never come back to stay, any more than Sid would come back, or George, or Lon, or any of the five who had gone to get away from the drudgery of the farm. But Lesby and John continued to hope and plan like two children at playing house.

Norm did not come back. Instead, that autumn brought a letter stating that he had married a widow. His letter was filled with a list of the woman's excellent qualities; and tucked in between the eulogies, as if ashamed to put it boldly, was the statement that he must stick to his job. From that day John and Lesby talked no more about Norm's coming back.

John's spirits drooped. His desire to go on began to ebb. One early morning when the frosty dew on the sloping wooden way leading up into the barn lay a bit greasy from a sun not half an hour high, John slipped and wrenched his back. Lesby carried him into the house and laid him on the bed in the room off the kitchen—the room that had been Norm's.

Anne did not go to bed that night. She fell asleep in the arm-chair in the corner of the kitchen. She woke stiff and cramp-

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ed, her eyes sticky with dried tears. Daylight was streaming into the cold room and the strong smell of kerosene pressed upon her from the guttering lamp which she had left burning. From the room upstairs came the sound of Lesby scuffling into her heavy boots. By the time she had come down, Anne had blown out the lamp and was making the fire in the cook-stove.

"I heard you and Father talkin' last night," she began as soon as Lesby entered.

"Sh—he'll hear youse."

Anne dropped her voice. "Is it so you're goin' to sell?" she asked. She was trembling as much with cold as with emotion.

"Don't be a fool now." Lesby's tone and manner were rough. "They's other farms, ain't they? Land's cheaper over by the Bush. Fifty acres is enough anyways."

Anne followed her into the lean-to. She was fighting her tears back with all her strength. "Why not sell half, Lesby?"

"Yas—" Lesby raised a dripping face from the wash-basin. It was fine with scorn. "An' keep the crick—eh? An' the maple grove an' the cherry thicket."

At that Anne ran outside and for a time cried in the cold protection of the privy.

So two copies of an advertisement were written out in Anne's neat schoolgirl script, and sent to two papers: one at Toronto and one at Montreal. Then they waited. It was on the first day in which John sat up in a chair by the kitchen stove with a hassock under his feet and a pillow at the small of his back that a letter came from Montreal. It was from one Stephen MacLaren. He was coming to look at the farm.

Each morning the three thought: "He will come to-day." Each night: "To-morrow will bring him." They did not speak of him; but each knew that every hour's work put on the place inside and out was done to take the eye of the looked-for—yet to Anne, dreaded—purchaser.

"We might butcher," said John at the breakfast-table one morning. "It'd look pretty fine for him to see some hams an' sides hangin' in the smokus."

"Not a bad idea, Pa." And in the conversation which followed, Anne's appetite fled.

The strips of bacon in the plate in front of Lesby seemed to be wriggling with life as the two talked of the smoked meat that was to adorn the smoke-house: the bacon and sides, the shoulders and hams, the pickled feet and pressed head-cheese, the many pounds of sausage stuffed in gut, the many kegs of good, white lard—all from a hog which at that very minute was peacefully dozing in the sunny pig-lot, grunting happily in ignorance of the fate in store for him.

Lesby pushed back her chair and reached for a tooth-pick.

"I'll need all the help I can get, Anne. Nate's helpin' the Hethabys, an' Walt's dryin' in to-day an' can't leave his hay. Youse'll have to lend a hand."

"I can't." Anne's heart had come into her throat. It was beating there like a wild bird trying to escape. "I can't, Lesby. It makes me sick."

"Now looky here. Scrapin' ain't goin' to hurt youse none. It ain't hard work."

"There's no reason you can't help," put in her father. "If Lesby does the stickin' an' the dippin', youse ought to help do the scrapin'."

A shudder passed over Anne. She could feel the goose-flesh come to her cheeks. She pushed away her unfinished breakfast. The sight of it revolted her. "It makes me sick to my stomach," she protested.

Lesby flicked her tooth-pick in the di-

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rection of the wood-box as she got up. "Just the same, youse be on hand when the time comes for scrapin'. . . . An' mind youse put on yer britches—not yer Sunday dress." And laughing at her jibe, she took down her old felt hat from its peg inside the lean-to door and disappeared in the direction of the barn with John hobbling on his cane in her wake.

Half an hour later, the table cleared and her bed up-stairs hurriedly and indifferently made, Anne slipped out of the side door and in a few minutes was running over the field in the direction of the cherry thicket to get out of range of the sound of the squeal which she knew would be the death-cry of a hog whose back she had rubbed with a corn-cob only the day before.

Some time later Anne was climbing the rail fence into Milliken's. Here she would be out of ear-shot; and here she stayed wandering about the edge of the swamp peering in at the strange-looking flowers which she fancied she could see. The loggers who had been clearing the swamp for the past year had one day brought out to her a bunch of blooms which she had never seen before. But the loggers wore waders to their hips, which dripped ooze as they came out. They were wary of the treacherous places there; they had ordered her not to go any farther.

As Anne stood listening she could hear the buzz of the saw rising faintly on the clear, crisp air. They would be cutting till the swamp froze, the logger had told her. Then the cawing of the rooks drowned the droning hum of the distant saw, and there came to her ears the slow, even beating of a horse's hoofs coming from the direction of Niss'pong.

Curiosity led her to the edge of the swamp that flanked the road. Horsemen were not common along the 'Leventh Line. . . .

As horse and rider neared the spot where she stood, she drew back suddenly among the thick-growing trees. The horse swerved at her quick action, but the man brought him into the road again and pulled him to a standstill directly opposite her. He was within a few feet of her—she could have touched his boot, and she watched him as his eyes swept the country. He had risen in his stirrups to scan the surrounding land. She could see that the sight pleased him. He had taken off his hat and his hair shone red in the sun. That it was Stephen MacLaren she did not doubt for a moment. Her eyes had not left his face as she crouched there hidden from him by the branches. She could feel her heart beat wildly, jerkily, as if struggling to betray her, for as she looked she knew that he was the man she wanted and that she would never want any one else.

When the bay horse had carried him beyond the grove of butternut trees and she could no longer see him, Anne turned quickly in the direction of home. Cutting across pastures, climbing the fences in a short cut to the house, she reached the side door, her chest stabbing her with pain from her run.

A curl of smoke was climbing upward from the dying fire under the pot of the pig-dip outside the smoke-house; and hanging high as Haman against the clear sky between smoke-house and barn rose the pinkly nude carcass of the cleanly scraped hog strung up by his hams. A handsome bay horse stood in the barn-lot and a strange saddle straddled the fence near by. John stood at the gate which led into the corn-field. He looked old and bent as he stood talking to the stranger—a stranger who was neither old nor bent nor in need of a cane.

Anne's bosom was swelling with a strange, exquisite joy as she ran into the

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house and up to her room which she shared with Lesby. Here she changed quickly to her blue Sunday dress and soft slippers with two straps, and in a few minutes was descending the stairs at a sedate pace, smoothing her hair with her hands as she went.

The kitchen was empty. It took her but a moment to cover the bare table with the red-and-white-checked cloth and to put the glass berry-bowl in the centre, and pass on into the lean-to. At the bench by the door Lesby was washing her bloody arms in a basin of discolored water. She was unconcernedly chewing a straw. Through the open doorway Anne could see that her father and the stranger had left the gate and were approaching the house.

It was on Anne's lips to warn Lesby—to tell her there was time to take off her trousers and coarse shirt and put on her wine-colored silk and cameo pin. The words trembled on the edge of Anne's pale lips. Her heart beat loudly in her ears, torn between her love for Lesby and fear of her power. There rose in her the cry: "Not this one. . . . Not this one. . . . Oh, God, I've never envied her any of the others——"

Lesby had straightened up and, jerking down the towel, was standing in the doorway.

"I guess that's the fellow who's come to look over the place," she remarked around the straw gripped between her teeth. "Looks likely, don't he?" She stepped outside and Anne moved with her and together they waited.

Then the stranger caught sight of them and took off his hat and his hair shone red in the sun; and Anne felt her face burn as she saw that Lesby had forgotten to fasten the bosom of her shirt.

But the man had called out something. "I see you've been butchering," he had said; and Anne, glancing at her sister again, wondered if Judith looked any more triumphantly magnificent as she stood clutching the dripping head of Holofernes than Lesby did with the bloody towel as she replied with a flash of her white teeth still gripping the straw:

"Close onto six hundred—some hog!"

The man laughed. And his laugh was like his voice, full and rich and deep—straight from his lungs.

"This is Stephen MacLaren, Lesby," said John. "My daughter Lesby, sir—and Anne." This last an afterthought.

Anne's eyes fell suddenly. They lifted again an instant later. But in that short fraction of time Stephen MacLaren's deep blue eyes had passed over her and returned to Lesby, where they stayed, and Anne drew back unobserved into the shady interior of the lean-to and reentered the kitchen.

Not only did Stephen MacLaren stay to lunch, but for supper as well. He remained the night, occupying Norm's room down-stairs off the kitchen where John had lain so long with a lame back. The end of the week found Stephen still at the farm. He had gone over every foot of the place on horseback, and Lesby had ridden with him. Astride old blind Moll, who was as sure-footed as if she could see, Lesby rode with him in her splotched breeches, her coarse shirt open at her neck, the felt hat flopping about her face. And as they rode, she pointed out the good and bad points of the farm, making the best of the good ones, but not covering up the bad. And Stephen's deep-set eyes were as often on her as on the country she pointed out to him.

Each afternoon while Nate the Wanderer did Lesby's chores, Anne watched the two ride down the lane that led to the farther ends of the farm, their bodies now swaying together, their shoulders touching. During those bitter moments,

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Anne hated Lesby with a passionate intensity. She hated her beauty, her strength, her stolid, easy-going acceptance of the admiration of men as her natural right. Yet when Lesby returned, she longed to fling herself at Lesby's feet and beg forgiveness for the evil thoughts which had tortured her.

At the end of the week, Stephen offered to buy a half-interest in the farm. They were to hold the other portion and remain. The barn would have a new roof, the smoke-house new weather-boarding, the horses new harness. New machinery would be purchased. And next year good steers—white-faced Herefords—a silo—

Anne, hearing all this and seeing her father's stammering acceptance and Lesby's broad smile and offered hand, hid weeping behind the pantry door. Nor did she know whether she cried because Stephen MacLaren had given her back her cherry thicket and maple grove filled with wind-whispers or because he had done it to keep Lesby with him on the farm.

Installed in Norm's room down-stairs off the kitchen, Stephen became one of the family as if he had never been anything else. To Lesby and John it seemed that there had come back to them in this one man all the best which had been in the five they had lost. He had taken over the management of the farm with a skill and self-assurance that brought a blessed sense of security to John. For this reason—if for no other—he would have found favor in Lesby's eyes.

As for Anne, she knew only that she loved him with a love for which he had given her no cause. Her heart cried out for those things she did not possess—those things which would turn his eyes to her so he could see her. At night as she lay beside Lesby she prayed that he would see her before it was too late—that he would see her not as he saw the clock on the kitchen shelf, or the glass berry-bowl; but as a woman moving about with a live, pulsing heart—a heart that sent the blood pounding at his voice and made her flee at the sound of his step. For she knew that he was only as aware of her presence as he was unconsciously conscious of the smell of the newly cut hay or the flutter of a kildeer in the fence-corner.

Stephen tackled the work about him whole-heartedly. He got in two men—Jerg Timmer and Chuck Lowray. Good men, both of them. Lesby knew it when she first clapped eyes on them. She carried the news to John, adding:

"It was a lucky day that brung Stephen MacLaren here, Pa."

John smiled slyly. "Yas."

"Jerg an' Chuck look like good workers. Stephen is sure a good picker o' men."

"An' a good picker o' women—or I'm blind," rejoined John boldly.

"Don't be a fool, Pa. Stephen ain't been on the place a month."

"Yas—but I ain't noticin' Milt Santee or Calloway or Larrabee hangin' round like, since he come."

"Walt comes," said Anne, lowering her book. Her lips were in a pale line at their plain speaking. "I don't see that Walt's been scared off."

Lesby laughed. "She's right. Walt comes."

"He only comes to the barn to borrow the loan of som'p'n," returned John. "Youse don't seem to like Stephen, gal."

Anne's face slid down behind her book and Lesby chuckled.

"Anne's got it in for Stephen for ownin' half the farm, Pa. That's what's the matter with her."

"After all he's done for us," rebuked John. "We'd be in a pretty mess if it warn't for him."

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Anne's book remained up.

Winter was in the air. Any night might bring it. The stock was brought into the shelter of the stalls and thirty cords of wood were carried into the lean-to adjoining the kitchen—and just in time. One morning found the snow to the door-knobs. And winter settled down upon the farm. It found John smiling oftener; the tired, wistful look in his gray eyes was gone. The shoulders, relieved of their load, had straightened a little. There was a great deal to be thankful for; for with the fields a foot deep in snow as far as the eye could see and with Stephen and Jerg and Chuck to do the work at the barn, it left Lesby free to see to the house. John was glad of this. Anne's biscuits were heavy and she always forgot to make gravy.

On these bitter days and more bitter nights, the fire in the cook-stove never quite died out. Anne had always sat up an hour or so later than Lesby and John and it was her duty to bank the fire with ashes before she came up to bed, so Lesby could shake it down in the morning and start the fire going with a few chips.

Now, after Lesby and John climbed to their rooms, Stephen read on beside the kitchen table under the hanging-lamp while Anne sat across the room with a small lamp of her own at her elbow on the sewing-machine, her feet curled up under her in the chair to keep them warm.

There were times when Stephen had the feeling that a pair of dark eyes were regarding him from the other side of the room over the top of a book; but when he glanced up, the eyes were always lowered to the page or the book was up between them.

Once he glanced up suddenly to find her sitting with her book in her lap. Her eyes were half-shut and a dreamy smile played about her soft little mouth. It amused Stephen, that smile; and he went back to his book with the feeling that he had come near to blundering into a fairy-land where he would not be welcomed.

When the clock on the shelf behind the stove struck ten, Stephen closed his book, for he was up at five, and with a yawn and a stretch he took down the lamp from the shelf over her head and bringing it to the table lighted it and blew out the hanging-lamp's bright light, leaving the room in a softer glow. His "Good night" never brought anything more than a murmur from the small figure crouched deep in her chair.

But as soon as the bedroom door closed behind him, Anne put down her book and banked the fire and climbed the stairs to her cold bedroom. Here, shivering in the dark, she undressed and crept in beside the snoring Lesby and snuggled close against the broad warm back that smelled sweet in her nostrils of hay and horses.

III

With a glorious thaw, spring came in. Creeks and ditches ran full to their bank rims. The young wheat shoots, which had lain under the warm snow the winter through, sprang erect and covered the slopes with a rich green carpet. The purple martins swooped back chattering like children home from school and took up their old nests in the rafters of the lean-to. In the air was the smell of rich earth newly plowed. These were the days that Stephen drove the tricky mare Bet to the plow from sunrise to sunset.

"That work'll cure her of her nonsense if anything will," he said one evening as he doused his sweaty face and neck at the bench inside the lean-to.

Lesby had come to the kitchen doorway with a clean towel. "Youse mind

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them heels of hers just the same," she rejoined. "She's tricky—Bet is. I don't trest her."

"I'm not givin' her any time to think up any meanness."

Lesby hunched her fine shoulders. "She don't need to think it up. She kicks first an' thinks after'ds."

Stephen took the towel from her and stood rubbing his face. His muffled voice came to her.

"She's workin' like an old sheep these days. She wouldn't kick at a fly."

"Don't let her fool youse. Steer clear them heels or you'll have a nose like Calloway's or a chin like Santee's."

Stephen bent rubbing his hair vigorously. "I've heard a lot about that widower Santee since I got here."

"Yas."

"Pretty rich fellow, they say."

"Yas."

"Used to come here every Sunday."

"Yas."

"I been here over six months now and he hasn't been round. I wonder why?"

"Better go ask un."

Stephen emerged from the towel with his hair standing upright like a tousled mop. The light from the setting sun coming in at the open door had turned his hair into a flame of glory. He found Lesby regarding him with her hands on her broad hips and the blood warmed in him.

"You're a mighty handsome woman, Lesby."

"An' you ain't so bad-lookin' yourself, Stephen."

June came in and days grew warmer. Sometimes Lesby, her hands deep in bread dough, bade Anne get a pail of cool buttermilk from the cellar and carry it out to Stephen. Anne never handed the pail to Stephen. She always stood it near the furrow so he could get it when he made his next round of the field. She was out of sight by the time he reached it. One day he caught sight of her and called, but she pretended not to hear and hastened on over the stubble, her heart beating in jerks at the sound of his voice saying her name.

When he returned at sundown he came upon her inside the barn at the foot of the loft steps. She had been gathering the eggs, and it was plain to Stephen that if it had not been for the filled pail she held, she would have turned about at sight of him and fled up the stairs to the loft again.

"Looky here, Anne, why are you scared of me?"

"I ain't scared." Her eyes were downcast. The words were no more than a whisper.

"Yes, you are. You're white as chalk this very minute. I don't bite. No, you got to listen," as she would have passed him. "I been tryin' to figger out why you don't like me. I think I got it now. I've butted in here in the farm and you don't like the idea of me ownin' half of things round here. Well, listen—I don't lay no claim to the cherry thicket or to the maple grove, and not a foot of the crick is mine. They're all yours. I don't lay no claim to 'em—see?"

Anne nodded, past speech. At that Stephen stood aside and she walked rapidly out of the barn, her bosom heaving with pain at her struggle to keep from crying out to him that he could have all the cherry thicket and the crick and all the maple grove—even all of herself.

But that evening at supper, after the first friendly smile at her as he sat down at the table, he had no eyes for any one but Lesby. The two talked throughout the meal about the new silo—where and how to build it, and when.

"Stephen's plowin' the west twenty-

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acre strip." Again Lesby's hands were deep in bread dough. "Draw a pail of cool water an' take it out to un. You forgot to carry the buttermilk down to the suller an' it's turned. He'll have to do with water. . . . An' go by the barn an' tell Pa he'd better come in an' set a while. An' don't leave the pail in the furrer like youse been doin'. Stephen ain't the kind to kiss a girl behind the hay-stack. . . . An' say—tell un to come in 'bout 'leben. Ian Hempstead sent word he was comin' over—wants to see can he buy that Holstein heifer."

Not until Anne had gone some distance across the stubble with the dripping pail did she realize that in her confusion at Lesby's raw joke about kissing behind the hay-stack, she had forgotten to change to her heavy shoes. Shod as she was in the soft slippers which she had worn about the house until the soles had rubbed thin, the sharp stubble soon pushed its way through to her foot.

She hobbled on painfully under the hot sun, sloshing the water from the pail at every step. As she reached the edge of the twenty-acre strip she was relieved to see that Stephen and the mare Bet were not half-way across and going the other direction. It would be some time before he made the four sides of the field.

Not far off a straw-stack cast a welcome shade and she hobbled over to it and sank down and took her foot in her lap. She took off her slipper and examined her burning sole through the hole in her stocking. It was badly pricked and bleeding. At the other end of the furrow Stephen had brought Bet to a standstill. Anne sat watching him. He had taken off his hat and lifted his face to the wind. The sight of his vigorous figure against the sky sent a glow through her and she drew her eyes from him, the pain of watching him torturing her. She turned away and buried her face in the straw to shut out the sight of him.

She must have fallen asleep. Otherwise she would have felt the thud, thud of Bet's tread in the furrow.

"Damn!"

The word seemed to explode in her ears and she sat up. Not twenty feet away Bet stood stamping at the flies and Stephen was bent unfastening her from the plow. As he lifted the plow from the furrow and examined the blade, another "Damn!" reached Anne's ears and from where she sat she could see that the blade's tip had been snapped off clean by a buried boulder.

Stephen straightened up, wiping the sweat from his face.

"That was a picture—you layin' there asleep," he said. His smile showed his white, even teeth. There wasn't another farmer in the province with teeth like that. "Your sheep are all scattered, Little Boy Blue, under the hay-cock. Better get a hustle on you and go hunt 'em."

"I—I wasn't asleep." Anne felt that her face was crimson. She had tucked her stockinged foot up under her and was sitting on it. "I just brought the water—an' was waitin'."

Stephen laughed softly. "You were sleepin' while you were waitin'," he rejoined smiling. "You were the Sleepin' Beauty waitin' for the Prince to come an' give you a kiss and wake you up. And instead of a Prince—why, a red-headed farmer fellow comes along—a stupid old fellow who wanted to kiss you awake and didn't have the nerve."

"Oh—" A sweep of Anne's arm sent the pail spinning over the stubble and Bet threw up her head.

"Steady there!" Stephen laid a hand on the mare's rump. "Now look what you've done. Spilt all the water. Just for that, I'll be darned if I don't kiss you. You can't get away"—Stephen bent to

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examine the broken upturned plow again—"you can't run with one shoe off and a hole in your stock——"

He involuntarily ducked as one does who feels rather than sees something coming. He knew the slipper had gone wide of its mark; but his laugh at the unexpected action died aborning. Bet's hind feet had risen in the air. She had got the sharp blow of the slipper's heel squarely on the rump. The next instant she was off across the field in the direction of the barn with the lines bouncing wildly over the stubble, while Stephen, in escaping her deadly heels, had fallen forward across the upturned blade of the plow.

Anne sat as one petrified. Stephen had lifted himself from the ground only to sink back into a sitting position where he remained bent over with both hands clutching his groin.

"Go—for Lesby!" His voice seemed to cut through the air. It stung Anne's ears like the clear, sharp swish of a whip. "Go—quick! I'm afraid—it's a bad cut." He had to say "Go—quick!" the second time before she moved.

It was as he had said, she could not run with one shoe off and a hole in her stocking. She met Lesby half-way. Bet had jumped every fence between the west strip and the barn and Chuck had run to the house for Lesby. Nor were the words scarcely off Chuck's stammering tongue before Lesby had grabbed up her emergency box and was running like a wild cow-moose answering the call of her mate. She passed Anne like a gust of wind.

By the time Anne had limped in her wake back to where she had left Stephen, Lesby was bent over him washing out the wound. His overalls had been rolled down and he lay naked from waist to knees. Anne gave one look and blushing fled.

"An' right thar in the field," as John said later to Walt, "Lesby catterized the cut an' sewed un up."

"Just as slick, I'll bet," finished the admiring Walt, "just as slick as she sewed up the belly of that Hereford steer two year ago when that damn mare kicked a hole in 'im."

It was the next day before Doctor Mayberry arrived. Anne followed him as far as Stephen's bedroom door.

"Well, Stephen MacLaren," she heard him say as he entered, "so you were jealous of a Hereford steer, eh? Didn't want a steer to have anything on you, eh?"

Anne heard Stephen laugh—a laugh that cut off short with a gasp of pain.

There was a "Go easy with that laughin', Stephen," from Lesby; "you want to split your belly wide open again?"

"How'd you come to do such a fool thing as fall over a plowshare in broad daylight?" came Doctor Mayberry's voice.

"She kicked at a fly," came Stephen's voice. "I dodged and fell across the blade. That's all."

Anne's heart burned. A strange, new joy filled her. He had shielded her. She felt cold and empty a moment later at her father's drawl.

"He's got Lesby to thank he didn't bleed to death out there with that hole in him."

"Leave off, Pa. . . . Stop squirmin', Stephen. Let me take this here bandage off. Maybrey wants to see how it looks. Seem like we're goin' to have to strop youse in bed."

"Ain't youse a bit rough, Lesby?" came John's mild protest.

"He stood more'n this out'n the field, Pa, when I cauterized it to keep it from turnin' sceptic."

"Field surgery without anæsthetics, was it, Stephen?"

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"It was that, doctor, if that's hell. Lesby should have been a surgeon in the days of the Crimean."

The reply sounded grim in Anne's ears and her heart burned with love and tenderness for the man she had hurt. It seemed to swell and fill her bosom, leaving no room for anything else.

By the silence in the room it was evident that Doctor Mayberry was examining Lesby's work while Lesby and John looked on. When the silence continued, Anne's knees gave way and she sank down at the side of the door. It seemed an eternity to Anne that she knelt there praying behind her hand before the silence in the room was broken by Doctor Mayberry's voice.

"I couldn't have done better myself. . . . And there isn't another woman in the country who could have done such a fine job, Stephen MacLaren. Nor," he added an instant later, "nor a man in better condition to answer to it. You are a great pair—you two."

"They are that," spoke up John warmly.

Stephen's low laugh reached Anne's strained ears. "Well, Lesby, it looks like these friends of ours think we'd travel well in double harness. Does it sound pretty good to you?"

"Yas—pretty good. I might choose a worse mate to travel 'longside me."

"The question is, do you think you could choose a better one, Lesby Croy?"

"I don't know where I'd find him, Stephen MacLaren."

In the laugh that followed, Anne crept away.

IV

With Lesby taking his place in the fields and John pottering about the barn somewhere, the house seemed very still. Stephen could hear some one moving about. Now a soft footfall on the kitchen floor. Now the gentle closing of the pantry door. Now the click of the screen latch. Now the tinkle of a spoon in a dish.

Once he called out "Anne, is that you in there?" But no one answered. The other time: "I want to ask you something, Anne. Come here." He did not trouble to call any more after that.

He knew that she came into his room every day while he slept. The pitcher on the table by his bed was always filled with fresh water when he awoke. The medicine bottles had been placed in a neat row and the cloth smoothed under them. He knew that neither Lesby nor John would have arranged the bottles or smoothed the cloth. Besides, Lesby was far afield.

Then a day came when he feigned sleep lying on his side facing the table with an arm thrown up over his head, his chin buried deep in the pillow. He heard the door open softly, slowly, and he knew that she stood looking at him from the doorway. For a little time she stood there, no doubt trying to make up her mind that he slept. His slow, even breathing decided her and she crossed to the table and reached for the water-pitcher. Stephen's hand came down on her wrist.

"Leave go me!" The words were scarcely a breath. Her face had gone as pale as chalk. "Leave go me, Stephen MacLaren."

Stephen had risen on his elbow. "There's no use pullin' like that, Anne. You can't get loose. I just want to ask you something."

"No—no——"

He was dismayed at her fright and let go his hold on her wrist and she ran to the door.

"Just a minute, Anne." She stood waiting with her back to him. "Did you go and get the slipper you threw at Bet?"

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She shook her head. "You better get it. If anybody finds it they'll know I was lyin' about Bet kickin' at a fly."

"I—I hunted. I couldn't find it."

"All right. Never mind. Won't you even look at me? Do you think I hold it up against you because I was clumsy enough to fall over the plow?"

"I was to blame. . . . It was my fault."

"It was my fault for teasin' you. Come on—give me a smile. I'm not blamin' you. I got what was comin' to me for talkin' fresh like I did about goin' to kiss you. I wouldn't have done it. I didn't have any intention of doin' it. I was just joshin'. I got what was comin' to me. . . . I'm not sayin' I deserve to have bled to death out there. I'm glad I didn't. I'm glad Lesby came in time to sew me up."

"Lesby!" She faced him fully. Her face was white, her eyes like two big black spots. "You—you're like 'em all—like the rest of 'em. You're no bettern Milt Santee. You want Lesby like Santee wants her, Stephen MacLaren."

Stephen was too taken by surprise at her outburst to do more than stare at her. She was trembling so she could scarcely stand.

"You want her because she's big an' strong an' can work hard. You want her because she can lend a hand when you're short o' men—so she can take your place out'n the field like she's doin' right now when you're flat your back. That's why you want her. You're no bettern Milt Santee. You ought to be ashamed." Then she was gone.

On the days that followed, Stephen turned and tossed on his bed. It felt hard and lumpy under him and he swore. The still air stifled him. The water in the pitcher grew warm and tasteless half an hour after John had brought it, for it was now left to John to bring him fresh water.

More often than not John remained to talk. He told him of all that was going on outside, of Lesby and Jerg and Chuck and this and that. But John's voice had a slight whimper in it and Stephen wearied of him. He often feigned sleep until John crept creakingly from the room.

At noons Lesby came, sweating in trousers and shirt and sat on the edge of his bed, one great leg crossed over the other, a large, capable hand gripping her boot-shod ankle. She brought with her into the room the smell of the stables and cow-lot, and for the first time in his life the odor sickened Stephen. He felt ashamed of the feeling of repulsion it had given him; and he raised up and laid a hand on the trouser-clad knee near him. But before he could say anything, Lesby bade him lie back, "Go easy. Them stitches ain't more'n got a good holt."

It was left to Lesby to take out the stitches. Doctor Mayberry had been called to a case far up on the shore of Georgian Bay. Lesby tackled the job as if Stephen were indeed the Hereford steer. During the stinging, ticklish process, Stephen lay watching the strong, handsome face bent over the task, and his heart burned with pride and admiration. Yet when she had made him comfortable and gone away, he chafed anew under the accusation that had got under his skin. He was like that damn Santee! He was, was he?

The first day that he was on his feet Stephen made his way out to the west twenty-acre strip where Bet's heels had sent him across the plow-share. Lesby was finishing cutting the alfalfa in the northeast corner of the farm. She had announced that morning that she would soon be ready to take up the work on the field where Bet's heels had forced Stephen to lay it down. In spite of Stephen's insistence that the plowing of that par-

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ticular strip could wait a few weeks until he was ready and able to finish what he had begun, Lesby had calmly repeated that she would start on it the next day, and Stephen knew that nothing would keep her from doing it.

When he reached the field, Stephen found the plow upturned as he had left it early in June. Although Anne had said she had searched for the slipper, it was not long before Stephen found it. He rammed it deep into his pocket and returned the way he had come. John appeared in the doorway of the barn as he neared it.

"Better take it easy for a while, Stephen. I seen youse goin' over to the west strip. Youse needn't be worryin' about that plowin' not gettin' finished. Lesby said she'd get at it this week—maybe tomor'."

"I was just wanderin' round to get my leg limbered up a bit," Stephen replied; but he felt ashamed that he had descended to equivocate thus meanly even to John.

He continued his way to the house with his hand in the pocket of his coat. He found Anne in the lean-to. She was hanging a pair of stockings on the line stretched across one corner, and she turned a startled face toward him as he crossed to her.

"I found your slipper. It was out there. . . . Look here, Anne," as she took it and turned to the line again, "you say I'm like Santee and the rest of 'em, that I'm marryin' Lesby because she's big and strong—so she can lend a hand when I'm short o' men. But it ain't so. I chose Lesby as any man chooses his wife—because she's the one I want—and I love her." With that Stephen strode on into the kitchen.

Her voice followed him as he reached his bedroom door: "But you don't love her, Stephen MacLaren—you don't love her."

With his hand on the door-knob Stephen sent back to her: "Oh, I don't—eh? What do you know about it? Where did you learn about love?"

There was a moment's silence from the lean-to, and then: "Yesterday—I heard you— You asked her—for a kiss. . . . If you'd loved her—you'd a took it!"

Stephen burst into a laugh. He heard the screen slam as he went on into his room. He was seated on the edge of the bed struggling with his boot when Lesby came in.

"Say—you was all-firin' anxious to get out on them legs of yourn," she scolded as she crossed the threshold, "an' them stitches not two days out."

She bent and pulled off the stubborn boot with a jerk that brought a howl from Stephen. The flat of his hand came down on her broad rump with a blow that sent her sideways.

"Hell—want to split me wide open again?" he exclaimed.

Lesby had righted herself and flung the boot into the corner. "Pa said he saw youse comin' in from the west strip. That was a fool thing. Youse had four fences to straddle there an' back. Youse gotta go easy, man, or you'll be walkin' humped over the rest your life like old Snell."

Stephen sat holding his groin, his face twisted. "Damn you, Lesby, you sure give me a wrench."

"I didn't go to." She sat herself down beside him and laid a hand on his belt. "Does it feel queer? Let's have a look."

"No, it's all right." He turned to her and found her face close. "I didn't mean to bang you that way, Lesby. My hand shot out before I knew it. But, hell—you can't seem to remember I'm a man and not a steer."

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If Lee Had Not Won the Battle of Gettysburg

BY WINSTON CHURCHILL

What would have happened if the South had triumphed? Winston Churchill, distinguished English statesman and historian, views the new world which would have been created. In his essay, he assumes as a fact that Lee did win at Gettysburg and sketches the course of the Southern republic to the present day. He speculates upon the effect of this alignment on the world crisis of 1914 and on the careers of Woodrow Wilson, of the South, of Theodore Roosevelt, of the North.

It is a fascinating conjecture, an interesting essay on world peace as well as an entertaining reconstruction of history. It is the second of three articles. The third, "If Napoleon Had Escaped to America," will appear next month.

THE quaint conceit of imagining what would have happened if some important or unimportant event had settled itself differently has become so fashionable that I am encouraged to enter upon an absurd speculation. What would have happened if Lee had not won the battle of Gettysburg? Once a great victory is won it dominates not only the future but the past. All the chains of consequence clink out as if they never could stop. The hopes that were shattered, the passions that were quelled, the sacrifices that were ineffectual are all swept out of the land of reality. Still, it may amuse an idle hour, and perhaps serve as a corrective to undue complacency, if at this moment in the twentieth century—so rich in assurance and prosperity, so calm and buoyant—we meditate for a spell upon the debt we owe to those Confederate soldiers who by a deathless feat of arms broke the Union front at Gettysburg and laid open a fair future to the world.

It always amuses historians and philosophers to pick out the tiny things, the sharp agate points, on which the ponderous balance of destiny turns; and certainly the details of the famous Confederate victory of Gettysburg furnish a fertile theme. There can be at this date no conceivable doubt that Pickett's charge would have been defeated if Stuart with his encircling cavalry had not arrived in the rear of the Union position at the supreme moment. Stuart might have been arrested in his decisive swoop if any one of twenty commonplace incidents had occurred. If, for instance, General Meade had organized his lines of communication with posts for defense against raids, or if he had used his cavalry to scout upon his flanks, he would have received timely warning. If General Warren had only thought of sending a battalion to hold Little Round Top, the rapid advance of the masses of Confederate cavalry must have been detected. If only President Davis's letter to General Lee, captured by Captain Dahlgren, revealing the Confederacy plans had reached Meade a few hours earlier, he might have escaped Lee's clutches.

Anything, we repeat, might have prevented Lee's magnificent combinations

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from synchronizing, and if so Pickett's repulse was sure. Gettysburg would have been a great Northern victory. It might have well been a final victory. Lee might indeed have made a successful retreat from the field. The Confederacy, with its skilful generals and fierce armies, might have survived for another year, or even two, but once defeated decisively at Gettysburg, its doom was inevitable. The fall of Vicksburg, which happened only two days after Lee's immortal triumph, would in itself by opening the Mississippi to the river-fleets of the Union have cut the Secessionist States almost in half. Without wishing to dogmatize, we feel we are on solid ground in saying that the Southern States could not have survived the loss of a great battle in Pennsylvania, and the almost simultaneous bursting open of the Mississippi.

However, all went well. Once again by the narrowest of margins the compulsive pinch of military genius and soldierly valor produced a perfect result. The panic which engulfed the whole left of Meade's massive army has never been made a reproach against the Yankee troops. Every one knows they were stout fellows. But defeat is defeat, and rout is ruin. Three days only were required after the cannon at Gettysburg had ceased to thunder before General Lee fixed his headquarters in Washington. We need not here dwell upon the ludicrous features of the hurried flight to New York of all the politicians, place-hunters, contractors, sentimentalists and their retinues, which was so successfully accomplished. It is more agreeable to remember how Lincoln, "greatly falling with a falling State," preserved the poise and dignity of a nation. Never did his rugged yet sublime common sense render a finer service to his countrymen. He was never greater than in the hour of fatal defeat.

But of course there is no doubt whatever that the mere military victory which Lee gained at Gettysburg would not by itself have altered the history of the world. The loss of Washington would not have affected the immense numerical preponderance of the Union States. The advanced situation of their capital and its fall would have exposed them to a grave injury, would no doubt have considerably prolonged the war; but standing by itself this military episode, dazzling though it may be, could not have prevented the ultimate victory of the North. It is in the political sphere that we have to look to find the explanation of the triumphs begun upon the battlefield.

Curiously enough Lee furnishes an almost unique example of a regular and professional soldier who achieved the highest excellence both as a general and as a statesman. His ascendancy throughout the Confederate States on the morrow of his Gettysburg victory threw Jefferson Davis and his civil government irresistibly, indeed almost unconsciously, into the shade. The beloved and victorious commander arriving in the capital of his mighty antagonists found there the title-deeds which enabled him to pronounce the grand decrees of peace. Thus it happened that the guns of Gettysburg fired virtually the last shots in the American Civil War.

The movement of events then shifted to the other side of the Atlantic Ocean. England—the name by which the British Empire was then commonly described—had been riven morally in twain by the drama of the American struggle. We have always admired the steadfastness with which the Lancashire cotton operatives, though starved of cotton by the Northern blockade—our most prosperous county reduced to penury, almost become dependent upon the

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charity of the rest of England—nevertheless adhered to the Northern cause. The British working classes on the whole judged the quarrel through the eyes of Disraeli and rested solidly upon the side of the abolition of slavery. Indeed all Mr. Gladstone's democratic flair and noble eloquence would have failed, even upon the then restricted franchise, to carry England into the Confederate camp as a measure of policy. If Lee after his triumphal entry into Washington had merely been the soldier, his achievements would have ended on the battlefield. It was his august declaration that the victorious Confederacy would pursue no policy toward the African negroes which was not in harmony with the moral conceptions of western Europe that opened the highroads along which we are now marching so prosperously.

But even this famous gesture might have failed if it had not been caught up and implemented by the practical genius and trained parliamentary aptitudes of Gladstone. There is practically no doubt at this stage that the basic principle upon which the color question in the Southern States of America has been so happily settled owed its origin mainly to Gladstonian ingenuity and to the long statecraft of Britain in dealing with alien and more primitive populations. There was not only the need to declare the new fundamental relationship between master and servant, but the creation for the liberated slaves of institutions suited to their own cultural development and capable of affording them a different yet honorable status in a commonwealth, destined eventually to become almost world wide.

Let us only think what would have happened supposing the liberation of the slaves had been followed by some idiotic assertion of racial equality, and even by attempts to graft white democratic institutions upon the simple, docile, gifted African race belonging to a much earlier chapter in human history. We might have seen the whole of the Southern States invaded by gangs of carpetbagging politicians exploiting the ignorant and untutored colored vote against the white inhabitants and bringing the time-honored forms of parliamentary government into unmerited disrepute. We might have seen the sorry force of black legislators attempting to govern their former masters. Upon the rebound from this there must inevitably have been a strong reassertion of local white supremacy. By one device or another the franchises accorded to the negroes would have been taken from them. The constitutional principles of the Republic would have been proclaimed, only to be evaded or subverted; and many a warm-hearted philanthropist would have found his sojourn in the South no better than "A Fool's Errand."

But we must return to our main theme and to the procession of tremendous events which followed the Northern defeat at Gettysburg and the surrender of Washington. Lee's declaration abolishing slavery, coupled as it was with the inflexible resolve to secede from the American Union, opened the way for British intervention.

Within a month the formal treaty of alliance between the British Empire and the Confederacy had been signed. The terms of this alliance being both offensive and defensive revolutionized the military and naval situation. The Northern blockade could not be maintained even for a day in the face of the immense naval power of Britain. The opening of the Southern ports released the pent-up cotton, restored the finances, and replenished the arsenals of the Confederacy. The Northern forces at New Orleans were themselves immediately cut off and

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forced to capitulate. There could be no doubt of the power of the new allies to clear the Mississippi of Northern vessels throughout the whole of its course through the Confederate States. The prospect of a considerable British army embarking for Canada threatened the Union with a new military front.

But none of these formidable events in the sphere of arms and material force would have daunted the resolution of President Lincoln, or weakened the fidelity of the Northern States and armies. It was Lee's declaration abolishing slavery which by a single master stroke gained the Confederacy an all-powerful ally, and spread a moral paralysis far and wide through the ranks of their enemies. The North were waging war against Secession, but as the struggle had proceeded the moral issue of slavery had first sustained and then dominated the political quarrel. Now that the moral issue was withdrawn, now that the noble cause which inspired the Union armies and the governments behind them was gained, there was nothing left but a war of reconquest to be waged under circumstances infinitely more difficult and anxious than those which had already led to so much disappointment and defeat. Here was the South victorious, reinvigorated, reinforced, offering of her own free will to make a more complete abolition of the servile status on the American continent than even Lincoln had himself seen fit to demand. Was the war to continue against what soon must be heavy odds merely to assert the domination of one set of English-speaking people over another? Was blood to flow indefinitely in an ever-broadening stream to gratify national pride, or martial revenge?

It was this deprivation of the moral issue which undermined the obduracy of the Northern States. Lincoln no longer rejected the Southern appeal for independence. "If," he declared in his famous speech in Madison Square Garden in New York, "our brothers in the South are willing faithfully to cleanse this continent of negro slavery and if they will dwell beside us in neighborly good-will as an independent but friendly nation, it would not be right to prolong the slaughter on the question of sovereignty alone."

Thus peace came more swiftly than war had come. The Treaty of Harper's Ferry which was signed between the Union and Confederate States on the 6th of September, 1863, embodied the two fundamental propositions, that the South was independent, and the slaves were free. If the spirit of old John Brown had revisited the battle-scarred township which had been the scene of his life and death, it would have seen his cause victorious; but at a cost to the United States terrible indeed. Apart from the loss of blood and treasure, the American Union was riven in twain. Henceforth there would be two Americas in the same northern continent. One of them would have renewed in a modern and embattled form its old ties of kinship and affiliation with the Mother Country across the ocean. It was evident, though peace might be signed and soldiers furl their flags, that profound antagonisms, social, economic and military, underlay the life of the English-speaking world. Still slavery was abolished. As John Bright said: "At last, after the smoke of the battlefield has cleared away, the horrid shape which had cast its shadow over the whole continent had vanished and was gone forever."

At this date, when all seems so simple and clear, one has hardly the patience to

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chronicle the bitter and lamentable developments which occupied the two succeeding generations.

But we may turn aside in our speculation to note how strangely the careers of Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Disraeli would have been altered if Lee had not won the battle of Gettysburg. Mr. Gladstone's threatened resignation from Lord Palmerston's Cabinet on the morrow of General Lee's pronouncement in favor of abolition induced a political crisis in England of the most intense character. Old friendships were severed, old rancors died, and new connections and resentments took their place. Lord Palmerston found himself at the parting of the ways. Having to choose between Mr. Gladstone and Lord John Russell, he did not hesitate. A Coalition Government was formed in which Lord Robert Cecil (afterward the great Lord Salisbury) became Foreign Secretary, but of which Mr. Gladstone was henceforward the driving force. We remember how he had said at Newcastle on October 7, 1862, "We know quite well that the people of the Northern States have not yet drunk of the cup—they will try hard to hold it far from their lips—which all the rest of the world see they nevertheless must drink. We may have our own ideas about slavery; we may be for or against the South; but there is no doubt that Jefferson Davis and the other soldiers of the South have made an army; they are making, it appears, a navy; *and they have made what is more than either, they have made a nation.*" Now the slavery obstacle was out of the way and under the ægis of his aged chief, Lord Palmerston, who in Mr. Gladstone's words "desired the severance [of North and South] as the diminution of a dangerous power," and aided by the tempered incisiveness of Lord Robert Cecil, Mr. Gladstone achieved not merely the recognition but an abiding alliance between Great Britain and the Southern States. But this carried him far. In the main the friends of the Confederacy in England belonged to the aristocratic well-to-do and Tory classes of the nation; the democracy, as yet almost entirely unenfranchised and most of the Liberal elements, sympathized with the North. Lord Palmerston's new government formed in September, 1863, although nominally Coalition, almost entirely embodied the elements of Tory strength and inspiration. No one can say that Gladstone's reunion with the Tories would have been achieved apart from Gettysburg and Lee's declaration at Washington.

However, it was achieved, and henceforward the union of Mr. Gladstone and Lord Robert Cecil on all questions of Church, State, and Empire became an accomplished and fruitful fact. Once again the "rising hope of the stern and unbending Tories" had come back to his old friends, and the combination, armed as it was with prodigious executive success, reigned for a decade irresistible.

It is strange, musing on Mr. Gladstone's career, how easily he might have drifted into radical and democratic courses. How easily he might have persuaded himself that he, a Tory and authoritarian to his finger-tips, was fitted to be the popular, and even populist, leader of the working classes! There might in this event have stood to his credit nothing but sentimental pap, pusillanimous surrenders of British interests, and the easy and relaxing cosmopolitanism which would in practice have made him the friend of every country but his own. But the sabres of Jeb Stuart's cavalry and the bayonets of Pick-

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ett's division had, on the slopes of Gettysburg, embodied him forever in a revivified Tory party. His career thus became a harmony instead of a discord; and he holds his place in the series of great builders to whom the larger synthesis of the world is due.

Precisely the reverse effect operated upon Mr. Disraeli. What had he to do with the Tory aristocracy? In his early days he was prejudiced in their eyes as a Jew by race. He had indeed only been saved from the stigma of exclusion from public life before the repeal of the Jewish disabilities by the fact of his having been baptized in infancy. He had stood originally for Parliament as a Radical. His natural place was with the left-out millions, with the dissenters, with the merchants of the North, with the voteless proletariat. He might never have found his place if Lee had not won the battle of Gettysburg. But for that he might have continued leading the Conservative party, educating them against their will, dragging them into all sorts of social policies which they resented, making them serve as agents for extensions of the franchise. Always indispensable, always distrusted, but for Lee and Gettysburg he might well have ended his life in the House of Lords with the exclamation "Power has come to me too late!"

But once he was united by the astonishing events of 1863 with the democratic and Radical forces of the nation, the real power of the man became apparent. He was in his native element. He had always espoused the cause of the North; and what he was pleased to describe as "the selfish and flagitious intrigue (of the Palmerston-Gladstone government) to split the American Union and to rebuild out of the miseries of a valiant nation the vanished empire of George III," aroused passions in England strong enough to cast him once and for all from Tory circles. He went where his instinct and nature led him, to the radical masses which were yearly gathering strength. It is to this we owe his immense contribution to our social services. If Disraeli had not been drawn out of the Conservative party, the whole of those great schemes of social and industrial insurance which are forever associated with his name, which followed so logically upon his speeches—"Health and the laws of health" ("sanitas sanitatum omnia sanitas")—might never have been passed into law in the nineteenth century. It might well have come about in the twentieth. It might have been left to sprout of the new democracy of some upstart from Scotland, Ireland, or even Wales, to give to England what her latest Socialist Prime Minister has described as "our incomparable social services." But "Dizzy," "The people's Dizzy," would never have set these merciful triumphs in his record.

We must return to the main theme. We may, however, note, by the way, that if Lee had not won the battle of Gettysburg, Gladstone would not have become the greatest of Conservative Empire and Commonwealth builders, nor would Disraeli have been the idol of the toiling masses. Such is Fate.

But we cannot occupy ourselves too long upon the fortunes of individuals. During the whole of the rest of the nineteenth century the United States of America, as the truncated Union continued to style itself, grew in wealth and population. An iron determination seemed to have taken hold of the entire people. By the eighties they were already cleared of their war debt, and indeed all traces of the war, except in the hearts of men, were entirely eradicated. But the hearts of men are strange things, and the hearts of nations are still stranger. Never

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could the American Union endure the ghastly amputation which had been forced upon it. Just as France after 1870 nursed for more than forty years her dream of *revanche,* so did the multiplying peoples of the American Union concentrate their thoughts upon another trial of arms.

And, to tell the truth, the behavior of the independent Confederacy helped but little in mitigating the ceaselessly fermenting wrath. The former Confederate States saw themselves possessed of a veteran army successful against numerous odds, and commanded by generals to whose military aptitude history has borne unquestioned tribute. To keep this army intact and—still more important—employed became a high problem of state. To the south of the Confederacy lay Mexico, in perennial alternation between anarchy and dictatorship. Lee's early experiences in the former Mexican war had familiarized him with the military aspects of the country and its problems, and we must admit that it was natural that he should wish to turn the bayonets of the army of northern Virginia upon this sporadically defended Eldorado. In spite of the pious protests of Mr. Disraeli's Liberal and pacifist government of 1884, the Confederate States after three years' sanguinary guerilla fighting conquered, subdued, and reorganized the vast territories of Mexico. These proceedings involved a continuous accretion of Southern military forces. At the close of the Mexican war 700,000 trained and well-tried soldiers were marshalled under what the North still called "the rebel flag." In the face of these potentially menacing armaments, who can blame the Northern States for the precautions they took? Who can accuse them of provocation because they adopted the principle of compulsory military service? And when this was retorted by similar measures south of the Harper's Ferry Treaty line, can we be surprised that they increased the period of compulsory service from one year to two and thereby turned their multitudinous militia into the cadres of an army "second to none"? The Southern States, relying on their alliance with the supreme naval power of Britain, did not expend their money upon a salt-water navy. Their powerful ironclad fleet was designed solely for the Mississippi. Nevertheless, on land and water the process of armament and counter-armament proceeded ceaselessly over the whole expanse of the North American continent. Immense fortresses guarded the frontiers on either side and sought to canalize the lines of reciprocal invasion. The wealth of the Union States enabled them at enormous sacrifice at once to fortify their southern front and to maintain a strong fleet and heavy military garrison in the fortified harbors of the great lakes of the Canadian frontier. By the nineties North America bristled with armaments of every kind, and what with the ceaseless growth of the Confederate army—in which the reconciled negro population now formed a most important element—and the very large forces which England and Canada maintained in the North, it was computed that not less than 2,000,000 armed men with trained reserves of 6,000,000 were required to preserve the uneasy peace of the North American continent. Such a process could not go on without a climax of tragedy or remedy.

The climax which came in 1905 was perhaps induced by the agitation of war excitement arising from the Russo-Japanese conflict. The thunder of Asiatic cannon reverberated around the globe and everywhere found immense military organizations in an actively receptive state. Never has the atmosphere of the world

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been so loaded with explosive forces. Europe and North America were armed camps and a war of first magnitude was actually raging in Manchuria. At any moment, as the Dogger Bank incident had shown, the British Empire might be involved in war with Russia. Indeed we had been within the ace on that occasion. And apart from such accidents the British Treaty obligations toward Japan might automatically have drawn us in. The President of the United States had been formally advised by the powerful and highly competent American General Staff that the entry of Great Britain into such a war would offer in every way a favorable opportunity for settling once and for all with the Southern Republic. This fact was also obvious to most people. Thus at the same time throughout Europe and America precautionary measures of all kinds by land and sea were actively taken; and everywhere fleets and armies were assembled and arsenals clanged and flared by night and day.

Now that these awful perils have been finally warded off, it seems to us almost incomprehensible that they could have existed. Nevertheless, it is horrible even to reflect that scarcely a quarter of a century ago English-speaking people ranged on opposite sides, watched each other with ceaseless vigilance and drawn weapons. By the end of 1905 the tension was such that nothing could long avert a fratricidal struggle on a gigantic scale, except some great melting of hearts, some wave of inspiration which should lift the dull, deadly antagonisms of the hour to a level so high that—even as a mathematical quantity passing through infinity changes its sign—they would become actual unities.

We must not underrate the strength of the forces which on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean and on both sides of the American continental frontiers were laboring faithfully and dauntlessly to avert the hideous doom which kindred races seemed resolved to prepare for themselves. But these deep currents of sanity and good-will would not have been effective unless the decisive moment had found simultaneously in England and the United States leaders great enough to dominate events and marvellously placed upon the summits of national power. In President Roosevelt and Mr. Arthur Balfour, the British Prime Minister, were present two diverse personalities which together embodied all the qualities necessary alike for profound negotiation and for supreme decision.

After all, when it happened it proved to be the easiest thing in the world. In fact it seemed as if it could not help happening, and we who look back upon it take it so much for granted that we cannot understand how easily the most beneficent government of which human records are witness might have been replaced by the most horrible conflict and world tragedy.

The Balfour-Roosevelt negotiations had advanced some distance before President Wilson, the enlightened Virginian chief of the Southern Republic, was involved in them. It must be remembered that whatever may be thought of Mr. Gladstone's cold-blooded coup in 1863, the policy of successive British governments had always been to assuage the antagonism between North and South. At every stage the British had sought to promote good-will and close association between her southern ally and the mighty northern power with whom she had so much in common. For instance, we should remember how in the Spanish-American War of 1898 the influence of Great Britain was used to the utmost and grave risks were run in order to limit the quarrel and to free the United

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States from any foreign menace. The restraining counsels of England on this occasion had led the Southern Republic to adopt a neutrality not only benevolent but actively helpful. Indeed in this war several veteran generals of the Confederate army had actually served as volunteers with the Union forces. So that one must understand that side by side with the piling up of armaments and the old antagonisms, there was an immense undertide of mutual liking and respect. It is the glory of Balfour-Roosevelt and Wilson—this august triumvirate—that they were able so to direct these tides that every opposing circumstance or element was swept before them.

On Christmas Day, 1905, was signed the Covenant of the English-speaking Association. The essence of this extraordinary measure was crystal clear. The doctrine of common citizenship for all the peoples involved in the agreement was proclaimed. There was not the slightest interference with the existing arrangements of any member. All that happened was that henceforward the peoples of the British Empire and of what were happily called in the language of the line "The Re-United States" deemed themselves to be members of one body and inheritors of one estate. The flexibility of the plan which invaded no national privacy, which left all particularisms entirely unchallenged, which altered no institutions and required no elaborate machinery, was its salvation. It was in fact a moral and psychological rather than political reaction. Hundreds of millions of people suddenly adopted a new point of view. Without prejudice to their existing loyalties and sentiments, they gave birth in themselves to a new higher loyalty and a wider sentiment. The autumn of 1905 had seen the English-speaking world on the verge of catastrophe. The year did not die before they were associated by indissoluble ties for the maintenance of peace between themselves, for the prevention of war among outside powers, and for the economic development of their measureless resources and possessions.

The association had not been in existence for a decade before it was called upon to face an emergency not less grave than that which had called it into being. Every one remembers the European crisis of August, 1914. The murder of the Archduke at Sarajevo, the disruption or decay of the Austrian and Turkish Empires, the old quarrel between Germany and France and the increasing armaments of Russia—all taken together produced the most dangerous conjunction which Europe has ever known. Once the orders for Russian, Austrian, German, and French mobilization had been given and 12,000,000 soldiers were gathering upon the frontiers of their respective countries, it seemed that nothing could avert a war which might well have become Armageddon itself.

What the course and consequences of such a war would have been are matters upon which we can only speculate. M. Bloch, in his thoughtful book published in 1909, indicated that such a war if fought with modern weapons would not be a short one. He predicted that field operations would quickly degenerate into long lines of fortifications, and that a devastating stalemate with siege warfare, or trench warfare, lasting for years might well ensue. We know his opinions are not accepted by the leading military experts of most countries. But at any rate we cannot doubt that a war in which four or five of the greatest European powers were engaged might well have led to the loss of many millions of lives, and to the destruction of capital that twenty years of toil, thrift, and privation could not have replaced. It is no exagger-

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ation to say that had the crisis of general mobilization of August, 1914, been followed by war, we might to-day in this island see income tax at four shillings or five shillings in the pound, and have one and a half million unemployed workmen on our hands. Even the United States, far across the ocean, might against all its traditions have been dragged into a purely European quarrel.

But in the nick of time friendly though resolute hands intervened to save Europe from what might well have been her ruin. It was inherent in the Covenant of the English-speaking Association that the ideal of mutual disarmament to the lowest point compatible with their joint safety should be adopted by the signatory members. It was also settled that every third year a conference of the whole association should be held in such places as might be found convenient. It happened that the third disarmament conference of the English-speaking Association—the E. S. A. as it is called for short—was actually in session in July, 1914. The association had found itself hampered in its policy of disarmament by the immense military and naval establishments maintained in Europe. Their plenipotentiaries were actually assembled to consider this problem when the infinitely graver issue burst upon them. They acted as men accustomed to deal with the greatest events. They felt so sure of themselves that they were able to run risks for others. On the 1st of August, when the German armies were already approaching the frontiers of Belgium, when the Austrian armies had actually begun the bombardment of Belgrade, and when all along the Russian and French frontiers desultory picket-firing had broken out, the E. S. A. tendered its friendly offices to all the mobilized powers, counselling them to halt their armies within ten miles of their own frontiers, and to seek a solution of their differences by peaceful discussion. The memorable document added "that failing a peaceful outcome the association must deem itself ipso facto at war with any power in either combination whose troops invaded the territory of its neighbor."

Although this suave yet menacing communication was received with indignation in many quarters, it in fact secured for Europe the breathing space which was so desperately required. The French had already forbidden their troops to approach within ten miles of the German frontier, and they replied in this sense. The Czar eagerly embraced the opportunity offered to him. The secret wishes of the Kaiser and his emotions at this juncture have necessarily been much disputed. There are those who allege that, carried away by the excitement of mobilization and the clang and clatter of moving armies, he was not disposed to halt his troops already on the threshold of the Duchy of Luxembourg. Others avow that he received the message with a scream of joy and fell exhausted into a chair exclaiming "Saved! Saved! Saved!" Whatever may have been the nature of the Imperial convulsion, all we know is that the acceptance of Germany was the last to reach the association. With its arrival, although there yet remained many weeks of anxious negotiation, the danger of a European war may be said to have passed away.

Most of us have been so much absorbed by the immense increases of prosperity and wealth, or by the commercial activity and scientific and territorial development and exploitation which have been the history of the English-speaking world since 1905, that we have been inclined to allow European affairs to fall into a twilight of interest. Once the perils of 1914 had been successfully averted

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and the disarmament of Europe had been brought into harmony with that already effected by the E. S. A., the idea of "An United States of Europe" was bound to occur continually. The glittering spectacle of the great English-speaking combination, its assured safety, its boundless power, the rapidity with which wealth was created and widely distributed within its bounds, the sense of buoyancy and hope which seemed to pervade the entire populations; all this pointed to European eyes a moral which none but the dullest could ignore. Whether the Emperor Wilhelm II will be successful in carrying the project of European unity forward by another important stage at the forthcoming Pan-European Conference at Berlin in 1922, is still a matter of prophecy. Should he achieve his purpose he will have raised himself to a dazzling pinnacle of fame and honor, and no one will be more pleased than the members of the E. S. A. to witness the gradual formation of another great area of tranquillity and co-operation like that in which we ourselves have learned to dwell. If this prize should fall to his Imperial Majesty, he may perhaps reflect how easily his career might have been wrecked in 1914 by the outbreak of war, which might have cost him his throne, and have laid his country in the dust. If to-day he occupies in his old age the most splendid situation in Europe, let him not forget that he might well have found himself eating the bitter bread of exile, a dethroned sovereign, and a broken man loaded with unutterable reproach. And this, we repeat, might well have been his fate if Lee had not won the battle of Gettysburg.

There Is No Evil

By Katharine Newlin Burt

She has fashioned a life for her own pleasure,
She has chosen the gold, discarded the gray.
For her rhythm she has taken a dancing measure
So that she cannot help but be gay.

She carries love like a thornless rose in her fingers
And has set faith like a cold star in her hair,
Anger she has left unblown like an ember that lingers,
Out past her threshold she has driven care.

Fear has been lulled into a dreaming slumber,
She has forbidden doubt, denied dismay,
There is no sad rosary for her to number.
The Cross of Pain is not her Truth, her Way.

When the gaunt grim world comes close beside her
To laugh in her face . . . she will not meet his eyes.
She has exorcised his tears, they cannot chide her
And when Death comes . . . will she not have her lies?

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The battle between science and religion has given place to the war between science and the defenders of humane letters. Mr. Eastman says in this telling essay that the Humanists, and the group led by T. S. Eliot and Edith Sitwell, fight for "the right to talk loosely and yet be taken seriously in a scientific age."

The Swan-Song of Humane Letters

BY MAX EASTMAN

THE word science, to the popular mind, suggests a limited kind of professional activity. It means working with test-tubes and telescopes, plotting curves, calculating equations. But these activities are not different in kind from what happens when any person makes an earnest effort to judge well and speak general truth about anything. Our judgments about atoms and stars are more exact and mathematical than other judgments, but perhaps only because our acquaintance with these objects is so shallow. If the stars came near, if one atom could be caught and delved into, the astronomers and physicists might find themselves almost as humble and distracted as the student of human nature. They smile at the inaccuracy of his knowledge. He might ridicule the timidity of their ambition—to study only things so far away or minute that a few accurate statements is all you can make about them. His effort, at any rate, is not deeply different from theirs. And if his findings are to be reliable, they require the same discipline—the discipline of suspended judgment, elimination of the personal factor, patience in the attempt to be consistent, a serene passion for verification. In short, they require to be scientific. Science is merely the persistent and skilled use of the mind and the stores of human knowledge about any problem.

Scientists are of course afflicted with a kind of professional vanity, and they occasionally get into a state of rapture over their ability to explain something mechanically, or mathematically, or with the concept of cause. You will see them at such times step out of their laboratories with a very unscientific light in their eyes, blow a horn on the street corner, assemble a few gullible people, and try to make a great impression on them by telling them that all explanation is mechanical, or all reality number, or that causation is such a rigid and exclusive principle as to make human choice a delusion. This never works very well, and need not be taken more seriously than any of the other frailties of human nature.

A more serious danger is the disposition to exalt science, or the word science, into a new benevolent godhead to which are attributed all the mystic potencies of the supernatural powers it has displaced. Each distinct step forward in scientific knowledge has been followed by a burst of childlike hope that now all problems are to be solved in fact as in the fairy-tales. Copernicus was followed by Giordano Bruno, sowing through Europe his flaming evangel of the Universal Art

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of Knowledge; Galileo, by Thomas Hobbes with his cooler but no less compendious dream; Newton, by Voltaire and the visionaries of "Reason"; Adam Smith, by the utopian socialists; Darwin, by Herbert Spencer, the credulous agnostic, crying, "Progress is not an accident but a necessity . . . it is certain that man must become perfect." In our own day Freud the discoverer was followed by a myth-making Freud, and by a whole flock of doctors who did not quite know for a time whether they were practising magic or medicine. These divinely comforting or miracle-working agencies made out of the name of science are the last gods to be conquered. But the only power which can conquer them is science. It is still only a question of the better use of the mind. To denounce science as "the false Messiah," basing the denunciation upon scientific knowledge, is utter sophistry, unless you mean merely to warn people against quack prophets and remind them that true science cannot offer itself as a Messiah. True science consists only one half in knowing; the other half is never pretending to know.

The intrusion of this disciplined and sceptical attitude of inquiry, into the world-old business of chatting about human nature, has been one of the principal events of our time. It is unhappily named psychology, the science of the soul—although its first step was to dismember the soul—and it is unhappily associated with all the most profitable forms of hocus-pocus. It is more tightly associated, however, with biology and the physiology of the brain and nervous system. Deriving a convincing force from these sciences, it advances steadily, a formidable although imperfect machine of purgation, from one sphere of our loose chatter to another. It arrives at last in the fields occupied by literary essayists and the professors and critics of literature, penetrating here slowly indeed because of the mountains of great eloquence that have been built up, and because the building of this eloquence is a well-paid profession. But it penetrates inevitably. There can be no ultimate resistance, unless you would rather be foolish than wise.

When Matthew Arnold wrote his discourse on "Literature and Science," the question was merely whether the "natural sciences" should replace "humane letters" as the predominant factor in education. And his conclusion that "letters will not in the end lose their leading place" was based upon the necessity to relate the findings of those "natural sciences" to the problems of human conduct. "This the men of science will not do for us," he cried. But those times are gone. The men of science now quite rigidly insist upon doing exactly this. Indeed, it is no longer a question of the relation between *natural* sciences and *humane* letters. It is a question whether scientific method shall replace the method of "letters" in the study of man himself. And since scientific method is merely the method of acquiring reliable knowledge in any field, the answer is obvious. "Letters," in so far as they deal with general truth and yet hold aloof from science, will lose their leading place not only in education but in the entire scheme of social values.

It would be truer to say that they are losing their leading place, and losing it rapidly. In 1880 Professor Huxley complained that "No reply to a troublesome argument tells so well as calling its author a 'mere scientific specialist.'" Today Hilaire Belloc complains that "A thing having been said to be established 'scientifically' there is no questioning of it." This change in the relative estimation of the scientist and the man of letters is the most important change in

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social opinion that has occurred in the fifty years intervening between Huxley and Belloc. In my opinion, it explains all the outstanding literary manifestations of our day. In particular it explains the peculiar situation to be found at the present moment in the field of criticism.

Two groups of essayists and critics seem to be opposing each other in this field. There is a young and cocky group who pride themselves on being "intellectual," and believe that they are leading us out of the romantic swamp into a new era which they call classical. Allen Tate, Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot, Edith Sitwell, Robert Graves, Laura Riding—readers of modern essays will recognize the group, or rather tendency, to which I refer. Then there is an older or more solemn group who regard themselves as the champions of moral discipline, and consider that they are rescuing us from "naturalism" and guiding us back or upward into the life of the spirit. These two groups—the neo-classics, as I will have to call them, and the humanists—exchange arguments from time to time, and also from time to time hit each other over the head with the flat of a sword or some other antique weapon. Robert Shafer recently gave Allen Tate a resounding thwack in the pages of *The Bookman* and received as loud a one in return. But the battle although loud is not very interesting, because the hostility is not deep. The two groups are quarrelling with each other only incidentally, and so to speak sideways. And what they are quarrelling about is the *plan of campaign* against their common enemy, science. The real war which they are both waging with all their hearts—the one under the banner of "intellect," the other under the banner of "morals"—is a war in defense of the ancestral preserves of humane letters against the encroachments of verified knowledge. To put it more simply, they are fighting for the right of literary men to talk loosely and yet be taken seriously in a scientific age.

In order to prove this, I have gathered one or two of the choicest blooms of their literaryness. I want to show by concrete example that scientific knowledge and a sense of its method would only make these critics do what they are doing better than they are doing it.

I begin with Miss Sitwell, a brilliantly colorful poet, fitfully brilliant in prose, the daughter of an aristocratic British family, a typical "neo-classic," with the most earnest conviction that she is intellectual. In a little volume on "Poetry and Criticism" Miss Sitwell undertakes to explain how the modernist poets are "bringing a new and heightened consciousness to life." She begins by flying from the contemporary knowledge of her subject to "those halcyon days"—she dates them with intuitive accuracy—just before Francis Bacon called attention to the possibilities of verified knowledge. Invoking upon her effort the purer spirit of those days, she proceeds as follows:

"The senses of many people are practically unused. . . . The result of this is that there is no connection between their senses and their brain, and it irritates them excessively when these are brought into relation with each other. The modernist poet's brain is becoming a central sense, interpreting and controlling the other five senses; for he has learned the truth uttered by Blake, that 'Man has no body distinct from his soul. . . .' His senses have become broadened and cosmopolitanized; they are no longer little islands, speaking their own language, living their sleepy life alone. When the speech of one sense is insufficient to convey his entire meaning, he uses the language of another. . . . Modernist poets

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are not difficult to follow if this fact of different sense-values is remembered."

In this untidy huddle of ideas, which might be the preparation for a rummage sale of the half-antique furniture of the literary mind, it is hard to know where to pry in with a little modern information. Suppose that, instead of knowing all about Thomas Lodge's "Defense of Poetry" in 1579, and Sir Philip Sidney's in 1583, and about Ben Jonson's "Discoveries" and Sir William Davenant's theories in his Preface to "Gondibert"—suppose that Miss Sitwell knew a little something about the senses and the brain! It sounds ludicrous, but when you consider that these are the subjects about which she is writing, it is not perhaps an altogether preposterous suggestion. If Miss Sitwell knew, for instance, that the senses are not five but nearer twenty, if she knew that the retina is in a peculiar sense a part of the brain, if she knew how integral is the entire experience and action of the nervous system, how this soul-brain that she has concocted out of a mixture of mediæval theology and modern newspaper jargon falsifies the facts and the ascertained relations among the organs of consciousness, is it not possible that she might have said something more pointed and more relevant than she has to the problem of "bringing a new and heightened consciousness to life"? It seems to me that without destroying any of Miss Sitwell's charm, which I indeed should posit as indestructible, we might safely offer this amendment to her intellectualness.

What she is really trying to say here is that the modernist poet heightens consciousness by comparing the impressions of one sense with those of another. And the whole passage is a mere clumsy and blunt approach to a subject that has been studied with subtle attention for fifty years. Francis Galton first observed a close association, and at times a confusion, between the impressions of one sense and those of another, and named it *synæsthesia*. It does not matter about the name, but it does matter that both he and others who followed him established the fact that while such an identity or likeness between one kind of sensation and another may be experienced faintly or occasionally by almost anybody, its vivid and frequent occurrence is a rare eccentricity—not pathological, but capable of becoming in extreme cases an affliction.

It becomes clear as you continue to read Miss Sitwell's essay that she is not so much concerned with modernist poetry as with an extreme trait of her own poetry. And the fact that this trait rests upon an eccentricity of her mind, so that many of these metaphors which heighten consciousness in her will as surely becloud and depress it in others—this fact, whatever conclusion you may draw from it, is of crucial relevance to her essay. In my view of the world it is precisely for the sake of Miss Sitwell and her essay that those plodding and meticulous investigators have been laboring away upon this seemingly trivial subject for these fifty years, and have reached at least one statement of fact about it which may be relied on as general truth. There is no "classicism" in Miss Sitwell's ignorance of this truth, no intellectuality, or nobility, or dignity, or beauty, or bravery —no value of any kind. Her very delightfully arrogant essay would merely be better, if she knew what she is talking about.

Not knowing what you are talking about is no mere accidental default, however, in most of these neo-classic writers. It is the substance of their faith. The extremists among them are not only ignorant of the scientific investigations of their subject-matter but militantly opposed to them. The word "in-

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tellect" upon their lips is a veritable battle-emblem—a challenge to mere knowledge, or intelligence, or any other crude enterprise of the kind, to compete with the exalted abstract talk which they produce after reading the history of literature. Miss Laura Riding, a young woman who in a brief span of years leapt from the dull level of the American backwoods to the very heights of British intellectuality, has written a book called "Contemporaries and Snobs," in which she attacks science and belabors it as though it were a no less despicable thing than ignorance itself or stupidity.

"A fetish of the concrete intelligence," she calls it, "a mere by-way of the suggestive intelligence, or intellect, a digression. . . ." Miss Riding's book is a torrent of uncontrolled cerebration in which few have had the patience to discover any coherent message beyond the quite obvious one that the writer is young, literary, and indignant. If you study the book with a certain diagnostic sympathy, however, seeking rather for the causes than the meanings of what is said, you will find it a most significant document. The source of Miss Riding's indignation is the demand of this age that statements made by literary people should have a definite reference and be valid. That is what she means by denouncing "the contemporary mind, or the concrete intelligence, or whatever we please to call it," and setting off against it a far nobler thing called "intellect" or the "suggestive" or "poetic" intelligence. What Miss Riding denounces as the "concrete intelligence" is the scientist's habit of *meaning something definite by what he says*. What she extols as "intellect," or the "suggestive," or "poetic" intelligence, is *literary loose talk*. With that much interpretation, her essay becomes a veritable tiny signal-post in the cultural history of man—being at once the most frantic defense, and the most extreme example, of literary loose talk ever yet penned or published—so extreme and so frantic as to suggest irresistibly that the end is near.

Let us add, then, to our anthology this purest and highest bloom from the neo-classic tree, the tree of intellect:

"The concrete intelligence suffers from the illusion of knowledge since it does not recognize a degree in knowledge at which all its laws and implements cease to operate and at which another order of intelligence enters. It is at this degree that the poetic intelligence begins, an illuminating ignorance in which everything is more than certain, that is, absolute because purely problematical."

T. S. Eliot belongs in his foundations to this same school of "illuminating ignorance." Indeed, I am not sure but he and Ezra Pound were the prime movers in this vain last effort to be at once intellectual and ignorant of science. Eliot at least did more than any other, with his serious historical scholarship and flair for the upper circles, to give an appearance of modern knowledge to what was really a rather frivolous contempt for the efforts to achieve it. His attitude to these efforts, particularly where they plunged into the fields occupied by polite letters, may be seen in the following passage on what he called "the present day."

"This day began with Tylor and a few German anthropologists; since then we have acquired sociology and social psychology, we have watched the clinics of Ribot and Janet, we have read books from Vienna . . .; social emancipation crawled abroad; . . . and we have a curious Freudian-social-mystical-rationalist-higher-critical interpretation of the Classics. . . ."

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Conscious, perhaps, of a slightly hoity-toity flavor in this irony, he interrupts it with the benign remark:

"I do not deny the very great value of all work by scientists *in their own departments*. . . ."

The italics are mine, and their purpose is to stress the identity of Eliot's attitude with that of Miss Riding. *Thus far shalt thou go* is what they both say to the spirit of verified knowledge as it begins to encroach upon fields sacred to the free, the pure, the literary eloquences. Stay in your own departments—here "another order of intelligence enters."

It is with this "other order of intelligence" that Eliot has defined his position as a critic and offered leadership to the modern tendency.

"I believe," he says, "that the modern tendency is toward . . . a higher and clearer conception of Reason, and a more severe and serene control of the emotions by Reason."

Had he not been dragging a generation behind the energetic brains of his time, T. S. Eliot would know that Reason with a capital R was long ago carried out and reverently dropped on the scrap-pile. "A higher conception of Reason" is as relevant to the present problems of psychology as a lower conception of the high-wheeled bicycle is to the problems of locomotion.

As for the emotions—Eliot tells us here that they are to be controlled by Reason. Elsewhere he has announced that they are to be "disciplined" by religion. In still another place they are to be "transmuted" by poetry—in still another, "worked up into poetry." On one page poetry is "an escape from emotion"; on the next page the thing to appreciate in poetry is not only "the sincere expression of emotion," but "the expression of significant emotion." Speaking of the "pernicious effect of emotion" upon Coleridge, Eliot tells us that the emotions provoked by a work of art "are, when valid, perhaps not to be called emotions at all." A few pages later he tells us that, "In the *Agamemnon,* the artistic emotion approximates to the emotion of an actual spectator: in *Othello* to the emotion of the protagonist himself." In one essay Eliot affirms that "the business of the poet is . . . to express feelings which are not in actual emotions at all"—whatever that may mean. In another he praises one poet above another because he gives his subject "a connection with that inexhaustible and terrible nebula of emotion which surrounds all our exact and practical passions and mingles with them"—whatever that also may mean. The citations are sufficient to indicate that, even in literary terms, Eliot has thought nothing through and has no position in the very matter in which so many of the literary lost sheep of the moment are looking to him for guidance. But even should he undertake to arrive somewhere and stay there upon this problem of emotion which so troubles him, he could not accomplish it with any cogency for modern minds in the unenlightened terms so far chosen. Whatever emotion may be, it is not an interior lake of nebulous and semiexplosive fluid to be "escaped from" or "worked up" by poets, swum in and out of by "feelings," and "mingled" with passions. It might be pertinent—if also a trifle impertinent—to suggest that had Eliot watched a little longer "the clinics of Ribot and Janet" and "read the books from Vienna," he might have found some solution of that particular emotional problem which is so obviously reflected by these sad fits and starts in the theory of poetry.

I have culled my next blossom of literaryness from our American champion

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of the modern tendency, Gorham B. Munson. Mr. Munson occupies a mid-position between those elegantly hell-raising critics I have described as neo-classical and the more decorous and moral ones who call themselves humanist. He has a deep admiration for Paul Elmer More and Irving Babbitt, but he is also a great advocate of "intellect" and the younger generation. In passing on his intellectual way through Wesleyan University, Mr. Munson must evidently have heard of the science of psychology, for in the passage I am about to quote he speaks of the imagination as a "psychological faculty." The word psychological has no meaning here, but serves to remind us of the existence of reliable knowledge and the possibility of making definite statements in the field in which Mr. Munson is about to release a piece of pure literature.

"As a psychological faculty," he tells us, "the imagination appears to be superior to reason, feeling and action: a higher development. Its processes occur in a flash and the word for them is simultaneity. The range of its simultaneous *perceptions* is not less than the whole of the given field. That is to say, the imagination in a flash *takes in* the whole of a given object—its origin, its history, its constituents and relations, its uses and its future: it *covers* at once all the actualities and possibilities included in what was . . . *seen!*"

Mr. Munson will excuse the italics and the exclamation, but that word *seen,* arriving after I had loyally struggled with *perceive, take in,* and *cover,* as describing the concrete operation of this truly remarkable faculty, was too much for the distending powers of my intellect. After reading this definition of imagination, I can think of only one experiment which might cast any doubt on its "superiority" to reason, feeling, action, or indeed any other faculty, function, or phenomenon yet observed in this humble world of facts—and that would be to allow as irresponsible, undisciplined, immature, inconsequential, and, in short, humanistical-neo-classic an intellect as Mr. Munson's to define these other faculties and functions.

If we wish to learn something about a zoological animal, we go to a zoologist; about a gynecological woman, to a gynecologist. This is becoming an established practice, and is at times so important that I do not see how it can be stopped. How long shall we continue to go for information about "psychological faculties" to literary critics who apparently never glanced in a text-book in psychology—who still skate gaily over such rudimentary distinctions as that between seeing, perceiving, and imagining, to say nothing of "taking in" and "covering"? Is it not obvious that this state of affairs can be prolonged only through a general stoppage of all growth?

It is perhaps unfair to base an argument upon Mr. Munson, for he is a kind of specially privileged infant-of-letters. He shows us the "superior order of intelligence" so blithely on the rampage as to relieve us of the labor of the *reductio ad absurdum.* But take Professor Babbitt himself. He is praised by his admirers as a "psychologist," and I have culled from his vigorous and splendidly erudite books three typical examples of his "psychology":

"The part that conceives, that reaches out and seizes likenesses and analogies, may be defined as imagination; the part that discriminates and tests the unity thus apprehended from the point of view of its truth may be defined as analytical reason; the part that perceives is, in the case of the humanist, primarily

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concerned with the something in man that is set above the phenomenal order. . . ."

"We may . . . distinguish two main orders of intuitions corresponding closely to the two main types of enthusiasm . . .: on the one hand the sensuous or æsthetic, and on the other the spiritual. . . ."

"Three planes may be distinguished—the religious, the humanistic, the naturalistic—though there are, of course, numerous intermediary stages . . . by which man may mount or descend from one level to another of his being."

Is this psychology? Is it not rather to be described as capricious and undisciplined homiletical talk, standing in the same relation to psychology that alchemy and astrology did to the physical sciences—destined as surely to lose its suave tone of authority and disappear? Professor Babbitt himself is quite aware that his home-made apparatus of "parts," "levels," and "orders of intuition" will not survive the advance of disciplined inquiry into his field.

"The humanist is not hostile to science as such," he assures us, "but he is hostile to a science that has *overstepped its due bounds.*"

Again the italics are mine, and their purpose is to show that Professor Babbitt is at one with Miss Riding and Mr. Eliot. The litterateur, the professional critic, the professor of literature—they are all defending, at some last ditch or rampart, the territorial preserves of their trade against the advance of technical and specialized understanding.

Professor L. T. More, himself a physicist—an ally in the opposing camp—is bold enough to attempt to define the exact position of this last ditch or rampart. He says in his essay contributed to the volume "Humanism and America":

"The scientist should follow in his investigations the phenomena of the objective world only until their special forms of energy are absorbed by our nervous system. It is in the province of the humanist to study the phenomena of the subjective world after these stimuli have been transformed into thought and emotion."

This was an indiscretion which the literary defenders of humanism would never commit. Indeed it was a fatal indiscretion, for I fear it must be conceded that by blundering in with this scientific formulation of a literary attitude, Professor More has given the whole game away. The strength of the humanists lay in the fact that while they were defending literary loose talk, the weapon with which they were defending it was also literary loose talk. That made their position well-nigh impregnable. They were protected by the mere automatic operation of their instincts, much in the manner of a small cuttle-fish called the squid, to whom I once dedicated these brief lines of appreciation:

> There is a fish-like thing, the Squid,
> Who chews a philosophic quid,
> And at the merest wish or wink
> Spits up a cloud of purple ink,
> Which hides himself and all he did,
> He is a literary kid.

Professor Babbitt, who is a master of the inky manœuvre, writes an article called "Humanism: An Essay at Definition." He begins by denouncing our whole epoch—the epoch, let us remember, of exact science—for its "loose and irresponsible use of general terms." He states that the first step of the humanists must be to define what they mean. Then he writes fourteen pages full of the loose and irresponsible use of general terms, without concretely defining a thing, and

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closes by reminding us that "the first step must be, as I remarked at the outset, right definition." That is successful eloquence, you see! That is literature. But now this naïve physicist, Professor More, glancing up rather casually from his graphs and equations, and seeing an esteemed colleague struggling and squirming in these foul clouds of his own ejaculation, steps forward magnanimously—professors *are* human, as a matter of fact—and offers to lend a hand in the rather technical and, to speak plainly, *scientific* business of definition.

He might as well have shot the esteemed colleague and set a tombstone on his grave: "Here lies the last enemy of knowledge." For when you have once designated the exact spot at which an activity called "science" loses its validity, and must surrender to another activity called "humanism," any amateur in matter-of-fact thinking can train his batteries on that exact spot, and you will find it untenable no matter where it is.

The scientist, says Professor More, may study the phenomena of the objective world only "until their special forms of energy are absorbed by our nervous system." But if you hold to that formulation, it will be necessary for the surgeon to consult a humanist before puncturing the spinal column or injecting his serums into a diseased nerve. Professor More of course would not hold to it; he would retire upon his second position, which is that "states of consciousness" mark the limit which scientific interpretation may not pass. And here we might merely remind him of the family doctor, whose benign function consists, assuredly 90 per cent of it, in offering a scientific interpretation of our "states of consciousness"—namely, in telling us that we are not as sick as we think we are. Would you compel the poor man to call in a literary critic before daring to assure us that our stomachache is not a cancer?

Professor More has demonstrated the folly of attempting to locate scientifically—that is, really to locate—the "due bounds" which science must not overstep, the "department" in which it must abide, the "degree" at which it must surrender to a "higher order of intelligence." There is no such bound, department, or degree.

Science cannot make your choices for you; that is true. But it is true of all science and of every choice. Physics cannot tell you whether to put lightning-rods on your house, it can only give you reliable general information about lightning. But you do not on that account call physics a pseudo-science, and turn to the literary critics for some "higher" kind of information on this subject. Psychology and sociology cannot tell you whether to commit divorce, murder, marriage, or adultery, but if you are going to choose, these sciences can offer you some clearly defined and fairly reliable information, in place of the vague, uncertain, and contradictory deliverances of humane letters, upon which to base your choice. I believe the majority of laymen who are marching in the humanist procession imagine that they are defending their right to make important choices. What they are defending is their right to make important choices on the basis of amateur, accidentally inherited, unchecked, and unverified information, while taking care, when making unimportant choices, to assemble the best information available.

This accords so ill with any conception of moral responsibility or human dignity, that after you have once realized it, you will find it impossible to believe that responsibility or dignity is what the humanists are genuinely concerned

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about. They take these words into their mouths, but in the depth of their hearts these solemn critics are no more especially interested in morals than the gayer ones are in intellect. What they are both especially interested in, like so many of the human beings around them, is their own profession. They are brandishing every weapon of idea they can lay hold on—brandishing God himself and the universe—in a vain effort to defend the prestige of humane letters against the inexorable advance of a more disciplined study of man.

Honesty

BY VIRGILIA PETERSON ROSS

ANNE lay in her bed, waiting for Paul to come home. She tried to think quietly. If you plunged back into yourself, way back, before these days and nights of dependence, it eased the restless waiting. You had not dreamed, two years ago, that a wall could stand between you and Paul, between you and any one whom you really loved. No. It had all been clear, then. You gave yourself wholly. He gave himself wholly. You knew the secret places of his heart. You laid yourself bare to him. And in the nakedness of your eyes, he found the joy of possession. Anne had been sure of this, two years ago. So sure.

She tried to lie still. The moments dripped by, each one more slowly, as though the springs of time itself were exhausted. It must be an hour since she had looked at the clock. She turned on the light. Only twenty minutes had gone. The clock, ticking so complacently, had a hostile face. Looking at it, Anne remembered the day Miss Demeter had given it to her. Two years ago, a week before her wedding, Miss Demeter, on her vacation from the school where she taught, had come to see Anne for the last time. That Aprilian afternoon, and the things she and Miss Demeter had said, and the things they had left unsaid, were limned sharply, now, on Anne's memory.

"The hardest thing to realize," Miss Demeter had told her, "is that we are alone. We're always edging up to people, trying to lose ourselves in them. But we can't. We can't do it."

Miss Demeter had spoken gently, that afternoon.

"Each of us is alone, born alone, wed alone, dead alone. You'll have to learn that, sooner or later."

Anne remembered, now, how she had answered, with such conviction.

"You're not alone—with the person you love. You can be one with him, completely, if you're honest. But of course you have to be absolutely honest."

Miss Demeter had evaded Anne's eyes, had shivered a little in the young wind that ruffled the curtains at the open windows.

"I don't know about this honesty of yours," she had said. "Honesty can be cruel. It's dangerous, honesty is, unless you know when to use it."

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Anne remembered thinking that you could not argue about honesty. You simply believed in it. It was the one thing to count on, the one thing that never shifted among the endless shiftings. "Honesty," Anne thought to herself, "is my religion."

That had been two years ago, yet still it stood sharply in Anne's mind. Almost three o'clock now. She turned out the light. As she lay alone in her bed, she listened acutely, listened for steps on the pavement, for a door to close, for the rattle of the elevator. After a long silence, she heard the elevator's humming approach. She sprang out of bed and stood taut in the middle of the room. The hum grew louder, then floated away, up, out of earshot. Silence settled on everything again. There was the occasional crackle of wheels on wet streets, the occasional sharp poop of a horn, the hollow clank of a trolley riding the weary night. Then, again, damp, unnatural stillness.

It was not the first time she had waited for Paul. By no means the first time. But the raw edges of her anguish did not seem to dull from custom. She thought of that first time, when he had appeared, tired, flushed, eager to see her, at four o'clock in the morning. She had waited since half past eleven. Every nerve was frayed.

"Oh, Paul. Where have you been? Why didn't you telephone me?" She had burst into tears.

"It was a good party, darling. I was having a fine time. One of those moods you just can't break into."

"Why didn't you call me up? Paul, why won't you be honest? You're tired of me. I can see you are."

"Don't be a little fool. I love you, Anne. It hasn't anything to do with a party. Let's go to sleep, shall we?"

He had kissed her lightly and gone at once to sleep, while the tears rolled down her cheeks in anger.

The same thing happened every time. She always meant to be indifferent. She was never indifferent. She would not grow used to it. He turned stranger, on these occasions, gently detaching himself from her intimacy, bottled up, as it were, in an alien mood. It did not help that Paul never argued, nor allowed her hostility to break the even tempo of his mood. It was only an aggravation. And the wall rose between them. And she could not see above it. And she could not penetrate it. She, who was ready for utter intimacy, found her husband wanting. He did not believe in her kind of honesty. His kindness had no meaning, for he kept himself to himself, despite it. Paul was not honest.

The sky grew livid with the first pang of day. Anne got up and put on her clothes.

"I can't stand it. I can't stand it," she repeated aloud.

The door opened and Paul came in. She had not even heard the elevator gate.

"Well?" Anne's voice held a rasp.

"I'm sorry, darling. I'm sorry. You shouldn't stay awake like that."

"Where were you this time?"

"I'm afraid I had a little bun on. I got into a talk and couldn't get out of it. Swamped there, till a few minutes ago. Darling, I'm glad to be home."

"No, you're not. No, you're not. Don't think I'm jealous, because I'm not jealous. But why won't you be honest? Why?"

Anne looked passionately into his face.

"Come on, child. Don't. It's just that one has to be oneself. It doesn't mean anything. We're best friends. You're my friend, Anne, aren't you?"

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"There's no friendship, with secrets. You hide yourself from me. You don't tell me things. I don't know you. We're not friends; we're animals."

Anne turned her back on him and stared, unseeing, at the bleak morning street.

"Anne," Paul spoke gently, "I don't want to dig around in all your thoughts and moods. You're alone and I'm alone. But we can pull together, if only we're kind to each other."

Anne wheeled round on him.

"If you love some one, you give yourself completely. I shall always tell you everything. I want to. I must. You don't know what love is. Not my sort, anyway. Being kind is not enough. It's a matter of honesty."

The sky was a harsh, pervading gray as Anne and Paul crept into the bed, carefully turning their backs to each other, carefully avoiding the touch of a hand.

After that night, Anne stopped groping for Paul. The link of her dependence upon him was broken. He came home early each evening for a while. He often brought flowers. He did not suggest going out without her. It was a gesture, so obviously a gesture toward her. She was grateful, in a detached way, while he anxiously flung out his white flags. But it no longer really mattered. The link had snapped. And when, at the end of a few weeks, Paul stayed somewhere again till nearly four o'clock, she fell asleep, waking, when he opened the door of her room, to a dull resentment at him, and at herself, for her indifference. She closed her eyes and did not speak.

Almost unconsciously, Anne began to watch other men. The need for some one upon whom to pour herself slid, unnoticed, into her mind, became part of her inner life, before she could admit it. One person, Tony, stood vividly apart from the others. She did not feel, with Tony, that dying effort to sustain a mood, that creeping intrusion of outside thoughts so hard to push away. Tony could absorb her. Even when, as he came more often to see her, he talked round and round the subject of himself, her interest did not flicker. He made her feel important to him. He told her of his loves, which were many; of his griefs, which were few. And in the midst of a long tale, if he stopped suddenly to say, "Do you know that you're beautiful?" or "In this light, you look like some ancient goddess, a goddess of fire, I think," she felt a warmth spreading within her. She felt, when he said such things, a mute joy. And when he had gone, although she had spoken little, she felt that she had explained herself and that he understood her.

At first Anne did not discuss Tony with Paul. There was no use. Besides, Tony's friendship was something to hug to yourself, something to flow along the current of your dreams. And while, on the surface of her days, Paul seemed important still, the world beneath, in which she really lived, was walled away from Paul, hemmed in with thoughts of Tony. She and Tony were friends, Anne said to herself, because they were alike. They both sought abandon, sought whole-hearted honesty, sought to strip away the veiled foldings which guarded their nakedness.

"Why do people say we're alone?" Anne asked him once. "Why can't one person accept another altogether and stretch out his hands to take her in?"

Tony looked at Anne, looked away, looked back intently in her face, and his eyes suffused with a rushing warmth.

"I don't know you, my dear. Not even

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after these many hours. No one really knows any one else. That's the best part of it—the mystery. I only know that you're beautiful and," he added in a low voice, "I would like to have all of you."

That was his answer. Anne smiled, thinking he knew her well, thinking she knew him, and tremulously letting her thoughts hover on his last words. "I would like to have all of you." Paul did not want all of her. Paul wanted her friendship—at least, he said he did—and he wanted her kindness. But he did not want to see the nooks and crannies, the tiny secret places in her heart. That was what she could give to Tony, for surely he would know how to accept it, Anne thought.

Yet when, in fleet pursuit of the warmth in his eyes, Tony held out his hands to take her, Anne shook her head. No. Not that way. Not unless she could be wholly his. All she said was:

"It wouldn't be honest, Tony."

This fire, abruptly flaring in Tony, mounted slowly through Anne's veins. She did not try to quench it. But she held it down. She banked it. She wanted to be sure. Because, if she grew sure, if she knew that it was the one thing which she needed, then she must tell Paul.

The days fled chasing each other into weeks. Tony came, insistent, and departed, resentful, and came again. A hush fell around them while the two little fires, playing in his eyes, kindled, in hers, two playful backfires. A tensity gathered, ripened, focussed between them, like the blinding first strength of the summer sun. He held out his hands to her. She ignored them. But when he had gone, she could think of nothing else. Hands that offered abandon and release. Hands that could grasp abundantly, and hold. She wondered that Paul could be so oblivious of this thing, pent up within her. Yet he must be oblivious, for he said nothing. He was kind, friendly, steady. Whenever she hedged about the subject, and she hedged now more and more often, whenever she tried to lead their talk to Tony, Paul steered her away. It was unconscious on his part. Of that, Anne was sure. He had no interest in it. That was all.

Then, one day, Tony kissed her. He came up behind her, softly, swiftly, and closed about her.

"I want you," was all that he said.

It was done, then. The kiss had done it. Tiny columns of flame flickered inside her. Her hands shook.

"I love you," she whispered.

"Come then."

"No. Not now. To-morrow."

She pushed him away and out the door.

To-morrow. To-morrow. Release in sight. Release, like a torrential rain upon the yielding earth, would come to-morrow.

But there was something she must do first. She must tell Paul. He should know this thing that consumed her. It was the tax for fulfilment.

So, when Paul came home, Anne sat down beside him. It did not occur to her to wonder what he would say. She was intent upon herself, shrouded in purpose. She hated to hurt him, oh! yes, she hated to hurt him, but it would be worse to betray her honesty. Paul, her husband, must know. And, whatever happened, there was the sweet relief of telling everything, of the cold, clear breath of truth between them. There was the security of keeping your own faith, your faith in honesty.

"I want to talk to you," she said, and although her voice held a funny note, her eyes sought Paul's without flinching.

"Darling, you sound so solemn.

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You've got that 'let's have it out' tone. Must we, Anne, must we mess around again?"

"This is vital. It's the most vital thing in the world. It's all of me—everything—at stake."

Paul sat quite still, as if catching a moment of respite. Then he said:

"Have you thought it all over, what you want to tell me, carefully, darling? Are you sure you want to tell me? Because, if I were you, I don't think I would. Once things are said, you know, they're there forever. If you hang on to them, you can ignore them. You can wait—till perhaps they just stop being so. And then, you see, they won't have mattered so much. Anne," Paul's voice grew urgent, "it isn't necessary to tell everything. Things get too important, that way, and they loom up so much larger than they should. We all have things that shake us up a bit. But when the throttling's over, if we've hung on to them, we can fold them up and lay them away. Anne, let's be kind; let's be friendly. But let's try to be wise."

Paul stood, now, fixing Anne's face.

A doubt crept into her mind. A stanch, little doubt that flashed its light upon her determination, and threw it into a sudden, sharp relief. But Anne fought her doubt. Even if it was final, the thing must be told. She could not and she would not be silent. She shook the little doubt, and its light flickered, was gone.

"I've thought everything over, Paul," she said. "There's no other way. I want you to know that Tony kissed me today. Never before, Paul. But he did today. He understands me. He really loves me. And I'm in love with him."

She could go on explaining, she felt, forever. She wanted to go on, to fight off a new fear that clutched her. But Paul held up his hands.

"That's enough," he said.

He moved slowly to the mantelpiece and leaned against it. He stood quite still, for a moment, the fingers of one hand pressing his eyes, as if to clear their sight. Then he went on:

"Now you've been honest. You've had your say. I'll spare you mine, though. I warned you that once things were spoken they lived and had to be reckoned with. I can't stand it, knowing about you and Tony. I love you too much and, after all, I'm a man. So I'm going, Anne. I'll leave you, now."

Then Paul left the room, left the apartment, left Anne alone. She was trembling. She felt sick. "But," she said to herself, "I did the right thing. I was honest."

The thought of Tony bolstered her. Tony would understand. Tony would be glad of her honesty. And through the night, Anne fended away the host of misgivings which crept, guilefully, around her. She was alone, now. Terribly alone, but to-morrow there would come the haven, Tony.

The hours of the night and morning dripped slowly, like the dropping of water into a bucket. Plop, plop, plop. Count them, and they will pass, and with them will come surcease to pain. Plop, plop, plop. Count them, for they are bringing your fulfilment. Anne did not sleep.

Swiftly, purposefully, with victorious grace, Tony swooped upon Anne.

"I've thought about you all night," he murmured. "Anne, dear, kiss me."

A crested wave, gathering itself, curled up and burst across the rim of her consciousness. At last, now, she could spill over.

His eyes were alight with triumph, as he held her.

"Nothing of me is secret from you. I want you to have it all," she whispered.

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"You are so beautiful. And you're mysterious. Sometimes I think you're a stranger."

"I'm not a stranger," Anne breathed fast. "I'm yours."

He held her closer. His voice was exultant.

"This thing between us is our secret. It will be perfect. We're alike, you and I. I do not want to be bound down. I can give and take, and then move on to other things. There are always new corners to be turned, aren't there? My dear, I want you, because I know you are my kind of person. You love freedom, too, and I must be free. When you're tied down to people, it's as if you were in chains—it kills your love."

"I know what you mean," she said. "I wanted to feel free, so I told Paul. He couldn't stand knowing. He's gone."

"You told Paul? About us?"

"Yes."

"But why?"

"For your sake and my own."

"You shouldn't have done that, dear."

"Oh! I had to. I wouldn't have felt honest, otherwise."

Tony sighed.

"Well, don't worry about it. He'll come back."

Anne looked up at Tony. Her eyes grew wide.

"Do you want him to?" she asked.

"What could you do, if he didn't?"

Anne got up and went to the window. She shivered as she stood there, her face turned from Tony.

Prelude

By Conrad Aiken

In the beginning, nothing; and in the end,
Nothing; and in between these useless nothings,
Brightness, music, God, oneself . . . My love,—
Heart that beats for my heart, breast on which I sleep,—
Be brightness, music, God, myself, for me.

In the beginning, silence, and in the end
Silence; and in between these silences,
The sound of one white flower, opening, closing.
My love, my love, be that white flower for me:
Open and close: that sound will be my world.

In the beginning, chaos, and in the end
Chaos; and the vast wonder come between,—
Glory, bewilderment, all sense of brightness.
Love, be that glory and that sense of brightness.
You are what chaos yielded. Be my star.

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This is an age without religion and without love, says Sherwood Anderson. The Machine has deprived man of his power. Woman has been driven to substitute material possessions for love.

It's a Woman's Age

BY SHERWOOD ANDERSON

It's a woman's age. Almost any man will admit that. He admits it rather sadly.

To my mind all sorts of things are involved in the matter. For the present at least men are somewhat lost.

It is an age without religion. Who would dare venture the assertion that the Americans are, at present, a religious people? They have taken old beliefs from us, have taken the life out of them, and have given us no new ones.

Something a bit queer has happened to man. The age has moved too fast for him. Science has succeeded in killing most of the old mystery. Who dare question the assertion? The machine has taken from us the work of our hands. Work kept men healthy and strong. It was good to feel things being done by our hands. The ability to do things to materials with our hands and our heads gave us a certain power over women that is being lost.

There are too many goods. The idea that it is man's noblest purpose to supply the world with goods has been carried too far. The modern man is drowned in a flood of things he did not make.

He has no definite connection with the things with which he is surrounded, no relations with the clothes he wears, the house he lives in. He lives in a house but he did not build it. He sits in a chair but he did not make it. He drives a car but he did not build it. He sleeps in a bed but he does not know where it came from.

He goes too easily from place to place. Places begin to mean less and less to him. He cannot remember the places. How many men are like myself, going restlessly from place to place, seeking something they cannot find? Places also have lost their significance. There is no mystery in distance. The more obvious mysteries of life have been destroyed too fast.

The scientists have taken from us old mysteries, and, as yet, no poets have arisen who can give us new ones.

It is the nature of man to need God, the mystery. Without the mystery we are lost men.

You have to admit it is not a laughing age. Listen in on the radio. All the laughter is fake laughter. It doesn't go down through the body to the toes. Notice how little real laughter you hear on the streets.

Listen to the voices coming over the radio. There is no reality to the voices. Who can speak naturally over the radio? The little machine, standing coldly there, is too much for the man. It confuses him, makes him ashamed. Dimly he realizes its possibilities. They are overwhelming.

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Something creeps into the voices coming over the radio. They sound false.

I am myself convinced that all this has had a profound effect upon the relationship of men and women. I think that is pretty obvious.

It did not start there. It may have started in the factories. When more men worked in the fields and when most of the goods we need to cover our nakedness against the cold, the houses we live in, were made by men's hands, men were different.

They believed more fully in the mystery of existence. That fact gave man a certain dignity. He was, at the same time, more sure of himself and more humble. Most of the modern assertiveness of man is due to fear.

What is there for me to be proud about in the telephone, in the flying-machine, in the radio? What had I to do with them?

It is a bit absurd for me to try to make anything. I had better just sit dumbly here. The machine can make whatever I need in the common affairs of my life faster and better than I can.

My own notion is that men need this direct connection with nature in work. They need to touch materials with their hands. They need to form materials, need to make things with their own hands out of wood, clay, iron, etc. They need to own tools and handle tools.

Not doing it, not being permitted to do it, does something to men. They all know it. They hate to admit it, but it is true. Not being able to do it makes them less men. They become no good for women. They spoil things for women too.

It is because of the factories.

But wait! The factories are themselves all right. The big complicated beautiful machines in the factories are in no way to blame. They are gorgeous things. I have been spending some months in factories now, just looking at the machines. Few enough people, not compelled to work in the factories, ever go into them, but they should go.

The machines are beautiful with a cold kind of classic beauty, but they are beautiful. In motion they become gorgeous things. I have stood sometimes for two or three hours in some big factory looking at the machines in motion. As I stand looking at them my body begins to tremble. The machines make me feel too small. They are too complex and beautiful for me. My manhood cannot stand up against them yet. They do things too well. They do too much.

I have to keep telling myself over and over "wait," I have to keep telling myself "remember men made these machines."

It may be that the men who make the machines are all right. They may be healthy. I can think of the man who makes machines, with a kind of gladness in me. He has an idea in his head. So he gets so much iron, steel, wood, what-not. The idea he has in his head works down through his hands. It is like my writing these words on this paper here. The ideas form in my head and then automatically my hands try to express the ideas in words.

This is what a machine-builder may do with his materials. He has certain problems before him. If he is, for example, building a machine to fly through the air, he has to economize. He can't waste materials, make the machine too heavy. He can't do that in building any machine. He has to avoid waste of materials.

That leads to efficiency and beauty. We have got to that in the machines. Most of the basic principles connected with the manufacture of goods in machines have been found out now. We are refining now, we are making the

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machines more and more complex, we are fabricating more.

After all, the machine is only a tool, but for the present, at least, it is too big, too efficient for us.

It plays the very devil with the man who works the machine. The man who works the machine feels too small. He is working all day and every day in the presence of something apparently stronger than himself, more efficient. It makes him feel inferior. His spirit gets tired. The spirit of the machine doesn't tire—it hasn't any.

The real problem of what the machines are doing to men hasn't begun to be touched yet.

But what about the women? Why are they more triumphant than the men in such an age? Perhaps they aren't. It may be they only seem to be less touched.

There are more goods made. Women get most of the goods. Men earn more money. The women spend it. They do right. Women are more practical than men. If they can't get what they want, they will take what they can get.

If they cannot get men, they will take goods.

But what do they want?

Love, eh?

Where are they to get the lovers, the mates?

There are more and more women going into the factories to work. I have been going into factories and standing in factories. For months now I have been watching the machines. I have been watching men and women who run the machines. I am an incurable humanist. I get nothing out of anything in life except as it affects the lives of men and women. There is a sense in which I have hated these machines I have seen in factories, but only because I am a man and hate to see my fellow men overawed, crushed, humiliated, made to feel small.

In the factories the men employees seem to feel smaller than the women. The women are affected less. It must be because every woman has a life within herself that nothing outside her can really touch except maybe a mate. It can be a very still, beautiful, waiting life. None of the women who work in the factories seem to want the men who work in the factories as mates. They seem to have a kind of contempt for them. Girl clerks who work in department stores do not want the men who work in department stores.

No woman really wants a man who feels defeated, crushed by life.

You look at her like this—the woman—there she is! Let's say her father is a doctor or a lawyer or even a judge. Or he may be a business man, a sales agent for some large machinery manufacturing company, or a farmer.

There she is. Let us say she is twenty-seven or eight. She has never married. Some women marry, others do not.

Let us admit that marriage, having children, keeping a house for a man, is a career. It is something to be done.

But we, in America, are coming more and more to the sophisticated point of view as regards marriage. It is a job. If you are a woman and have the chance, that is to say a chance that looks good enough to you, interesting enough, you take it on. So you are in love, eh?

It doesn't last.

Mating, if it were real mating, would last.

We are all coming to realize slowly, as we get more and more education in life, that love, meaning desire, comes and goes.

Mating is another thing.

You are a woman and married and suddenly you desire a man, not your

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husband, the father of your children, but another one.

Why? We ought to ask ourselves that question. What has life done to him to make him less the desirable lover?

Or it happens to a man. How many men who hold positions in offices are not in love, or half in love, with their stenographers?

Is this new woman more lovely than the woman I have married?

She isn't with me all the time. She comes here to this office of mine from a strange house. We sit closely together for hours.

She has no hold on me. I do not have to explain myself to her. She isn't onto me? But what do I have to conceal?

Let us say the woman I have married has been foolish. She has kept nothing of herself hidden from me.

Like me, she has ugly times. Look at the comic strips in our newspapers. At least half the jokes are about men being humiliated by their wives. We all look at these strips and enjoy them. There is another poor devil being made a fool of. He is being humiliated by his wife.

"I am not the only one."

There is that absurd figure in the comic strip, "Bringing Up Father." The man in that comic strip evidently began life as a laborer. He was shrewd enough to make money.

Obviously men do like him. He is always trying to get away from his wife, to go down to Dinty Moore's. He is a welcome figure down there.

His wife, always triumphant, is as ugly a figure as the artist can draw. How the artist must hate her. She spends father's money recklessly for anything that comes into her head. The daughter does the same.

In their home, a very rich, elaborate house, father is always being brutally snubbed; he is walloped over the head with a broom, with a chair, with a milk bottle.

He is thrown out of up-stairs windows, locked in his room.

The poor man, who has obviously made the money being spent in every conceivable way by the wife and daughter, wants little. He wants to go to Dinty Moore's and play cards. He isn't young any more but he likes pretty girls, likes to look at them on the street. He likes to eat corned beef and cabbage.

It is for this reason he is punched and beaten in this terrific manner by these brutal women, day after day, month after month, year after year.

Other figures in other comic strips getting it too. I have asked several newspaper editors and publishers about all of this. "Don't your readers ever get weary of it?" I have asked.

"I mean of the men always being pounded in this absurd way by the women, by the wives? Why is it always so one-sided? Don't your readers ever get sick of it?"

"We don't dare to stop it," the newspaper editors say, "we would lose half our subscribers."

"But why not, now and then, let a husband beat up his wife—not in fact you understand—in the comic strips?"

"It wouldn't do; they wouldn't stand for it."

"You mean the women wouldn't stand for it?"

"No, I mean the men wouldn't."

"They want to see some other poor devil getting his?"

"Yes, sure."

A pretty humiliating statement from a male point of view.

It comes and goes, this feeling between men and women. Marriage is a

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long, long test. Some men and women will stand for it, others won't.

If they stick it out, they gain something. Who has not seen sweet old couples? I have seen them. I have seen old Negro couples, old white couples, old Italian couples, old German couples, who have stuck together a long, long time.

Now and then you see a picture of some old couple in a newspaper: "Mr. and Mrs. A. K. Smith Celebrate Their Golden Anniversary."

My God!

Dear old warriors.

They sit together in a house after fifty years of it.

"You, John, sit still over there. Let me take another look at you."

"You, Mary. God, I have lived with you for fifty years."

Most of my own class in America, the artists, the poets, the painters, singers, sculptors, music-makers, actors, story-writers, have been married more than once.

They have split off from this one and have got another one.

Sometimes a third, a fourth, a fifth.

A restless seeking after perfection that is beauty in the world of fact, the world of flesh.

"Now I have it.

"I have it not.

"I have it.

"I have it not."

You meet such a man, a friend. He is going through it. He has left one woman and gone to another.

Women do it too. They leave one man and go to another.

What percentage of the men and women who go out to Reno to be divorced do you think intend to marry again? Once I asked a judge who had granted many divorces about the matter.

"What per cent of them intend to marry again, and almost immediately?"

"One hundred and twenty-five per cent," he said.

All of the above as thoughts in the head of a man—myself. Surely I am a man of a certain class. I am a man of the artist's class.

As regards human relationships, I suppose I am as muddle-headed a man as ever lived.

How could I be anything else, being both an artist and an American?

I swear I am both.

In a land where women rule.

In a land where, in industry, the machine rules.

It is inevitable, I think, that I must go deeper and yet deeper to get at what I am trying to say here.

I am trying to proclaim a new world, a woman's world.

The newspapers are all run for women, the magazines, the stores.

The cities are all built for women. Who do you suppose the automobiles are built for?

Practically all the American men I know have surrendered to women.

Are women then, in America, superior to men?

Not really. At present they have the best of it.

Because present-day life humiliates men more directly. More has been taken from them.

Here is a curious idea. For days I have been going about saying to myself something like this. "Suppose," I have said to myself, "the whole modern age, the industrial age, the machine age, were women-made."

I do not mean that woman is more inventive than man.

Man invents in the world of the imagination. When he builds a new ma-

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chine, he is only bringing over into the world of fact the thing born in the imaginative world.

That is man's world, the imaginative world, and in a curious way he has surrendered it also.

It is a factual age, and in a factual age women will always rule. In the world of fact every woman has the advantage of me because she has something I cannot have . . . the machine cannot touch her mystery . . . but let her come over into my own male world, the world of fancy, and surely I will lose her there. I will go sure-footed through dim, far reaches of the fancy where she must always stumble blindly.

In America there is an obvious danger. It is that presently man, having stayed for so long a time outside of his own male world, will lose forever the sense of it.

I, myself, feel this danger constantly in the presence of modern industry. I admit that man invented all of these machines. He is still inventing. The machines are running in the factories. Great rivers of goods flow from them.

It seems to me that the goods are mostly for women. Women are the great consumers. They have a passion for possession. The passion for possession is feminine.

Your acquisitive man is a man become feminine. How can this help being true? To be rich is to become conservative, to value possessions.

Your male should be the adventurer. He should be careless of possessions, should throw them aside.

His true place is in the imaginative world, the world of fancy.

I think we modern men have lost maleness because we have surrendered to the machine, to money. I will admit that we cannot get away from the machine. We will have to get away from it all we can.

How is it to be done? I have asked myself that question over and over. We will have to keep the machine and control it. Men who must work the machines, who do not build them, should be asked to stay in the presence of the machines for the present but a few hours at a time. They should be given the chance to get strength to free themselves. They should not be asked to stay until they are overawed, humiliated too much. We will have to have frequent shifts of men in the factories.

It may sound childish, but men will have to go back to nature more. They will have to go to the fields and the rivers. There will have to be a new religion, more pagan, something more closely connected with fields and rivers.

There will have to be built up a new and stronger sympathy as between man and man. We may find the new mystery there.

We will have to quit being afraid of sex. It isn't so terrible really. Life would lose three-fourths its charm without sex.

We will have to rediscover the wonder of our own maleness or the women will have no lovers, no mates. There will be no lovers. There will only be husbands. If something of the sort isn't done, if money and the machine continue to rule men's lives, then we shall have to surrender maleness. We will have to live like the bees in a feminine world, with a few drones flying about in the air, with perhaps just enough maleness loose in the world to keep up the show.

See "Home Is Where the Job Is," the following article for a woman's story on the modern home.

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The young business man of to-day, shunted from place to place by the nation-wide organizations for which he works, has no home, his family are nomads, his children friendless. Big business methods are more effective than many other more-advertised factors in disrupting the American home, charges this woman who knows by experience.

Home Is Where the Job Is

BY GRACE NIES FLETCHER

THERE is an instability in the modern home which is not caused by either of those battered bogeys, companionate marriage or divorce. It is due to the inability of young married people of the so-called white-collar class to stay in one place long enough to send down any roots. They are merely pawns in the game of Big Business.

It used to be only overalled labor which was shifted from place to place in the wake of industrial booms. To-day the white-collar worker is in a similar state of flux. Big Business, gigantic chain-store circuits catch him early, often at the college door, and set him down in whatever part of the country seems to be needing new blood. If he is successful, in a few years he is moved up to the next town. He leaps from New York to San Francisco, from Texas to Michigan, as casually as his father would have moved onto the next street. And of course he trails his family after him.

This uncertain manner of living keeps the young business man in a state of nervous tension. He is continually meeting new people, making new contacts, living on the bright, hard surface of things. Yet, although he does not send down any real roots into the community life, he appears to "belong," for he and his family develop a superficially standardized method of living and conversation as a sort of defense mechanism against constant change.

This seems to be, strangely enough, a completion of the circle which has returned America to the pioneering status from which it started. The hope that America would one day finish its pioneering and settle down to establish a civilization and a culture now seems to be endangered by the newer complications of Big Business.

The pioneering spirit which overcame the hardships of nature and the opposition of the Indians to conquer the West has been transmuted into a helter-skelter pilgrimage to North, South, East and West. The representatives of this pilgrimage go not from any desire to conquer new lands but because they are ordered to go. As a consequence those virtues of family and community stability which are said to make up the racial background of a nation are becoming as remote to-day as they were in the time of our forefathers.

Recently my husband and I sat down to dinner in a Middle Western town with twenty-four young married people, only two of whom had come from the same State. The hostess was a young Texan who had married an Englishman; the girl from California had met the boy

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from Kansas when they were both at school in the East; the Simon-pure Boston man had picked up his wife in Chicago; Ohio had married Pennsylvania; and New Hampshire had fallen in love with his charming young Western bride one summer in Wyoming.

Yet to the casual eye we might all have grown up together. All the women called each other by their first names and were dressed in so much the same styles that they might have been pinned together by the same dressmaker. Every one talked the same slang and chuckled over the same jokes, and every one had tuned in on Amos and Andy when they were dressing for dinner.

But actually the only thing we had in common was the fear of losing our jobs!

For added to this constant shifting of locale which working for Big Business brings to-day, there is also the continual uncertainty of how changes in the business itself will affect the young executive. Formerly the young man went to work for his father or for a fellow college alumnus whose conduct and plans for the business might at least be guessed at. To-day the strings of the white-collar man's destiny may be pulled by the invisible fingers of executives he has never seen—executives half a continent away.

When a business was an expressed personality and not a great impersonal machine, when a man went behind the desk in the town where he was born, it used to be a disgrace for him to lose his job. But to-day when each morning sees a fresh business merger and each evening sees it dissolve into a bigger one, the young executive never knows whether he will wake up with a job or not. When there are three cashiers for three merging banks, two of them are necessarily out of the picture. And when ten salesmen can handle a territory, naturally the merged business is not going to pay the wages of twenty.

So the morning after the merger, the young executive who had thought himself settled for life, dazedly picks up his hat and sets out to look for a new job. And so long as he is young and competent the chances are that he finds it; and his wife sighs as she takes down the draperies and wonders if the carpet will fit the new living-room.

"We've moved six times in the past two years," one woman told me, in explaining her battle-scarred furniture. "I've got so I teach the children their history and geography from the car-window as we go along!"

This ruthless shunting off of excess human baggage on the part of Big Business may be a necessary outgrowth of modern efficiency methods. It is a sharp angle of what a prominent Frenchman has called the American method of treating men as "units of production rather than human beings." It may be we get cheaper typewriters and automobiles this way. But man, after all, is pre-eminently a human being, entangled in all sorts of human relationships, and not a piece of steel to be thrown casually onto the scrap-heap. In social values the business man and his family, in fact the community itself, is paying a high price for these "efficient" methods. Especially the modern child is paying.

In the days when the family was firmly planted in the community, the business leader grew up with the town . . . or the town grew up with him. He was identified with all that was going on about him. He built his home of native sandstone, or rather his succeeding homes, perhaps each one uglier and more ornate than the last, but at least grounded in his native soil. His children

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went to the public schools. If he was not a pillar of the church, at least his wife was, and his children recited painfully at the Sunday-school concerts. Usually he ran for some sort of political office; or lacking that, he had his finger deep in the local political pie.

Contrast this situation with that of the group of twenty-four young people with whom we dined. Only one of them owned his own home. Only about one-third of the group were registered voters in the city; and less than ten per cent went to church oftener than Christmas and Easter.

It is all very well to quote poetry about home being where the heart is, but the ideal home is a desirable place as well as a state of mind. A place ample to live and love and play; a place to learn to mow lawns and to control your temper; a place to come back to, not only physically but mentally; a stabilizing force through the shifting years.

"Home means nothing in my young life," remarked the daughter of a chain-store executive, who was off at school being "finished." "I was shifted from town to town from the time I was old enough to talk. When they sing home sweet home at school, it always makes me laugh, for I have to stop and think where home is!"

Home in the old sense simply doesn't exist for such a child. How can she feel any sentiment for "the apartment-house that I was born in," or "the hotel that my infancy knew"? Not only is the young executive's child robbed of home as a place, but he seldom gets a chance to take out his neighborhood citizenship. It is all very well to sneer at neighborhood taboos and the interest that "our street" takes in its residents, but the fact remains that a neighborhood conscience is often the beginning of the individual social consciousness, and there are few of us who do not need to be nudged occasionally by what public opinion expects of us.

But the real tragedy for the child of the shifting executive is that he seldom stays long enough in one place to build up those enduring friendships which are the slow growth of years of playing, studying, and quarrelling together, from the time of the first trousers to the first dress suit. He travels from school to school, aloof and a little contemptuous of the children who have never been out of their home town. He is a pathetic little alien who has lost his social heritage.

It is natural for each of us to want to become an integral part of the community life. Not only do we want to belong to the community, but we want it to belong to us. From the baby who shrieks indignantly "My ball!" when you try to take it away from him, to the Rotarian who beams "This is my club, my town, my art gallery!" we all of us have more vital interest in something in which we have an ownership. Take away from an individual a sense of personal pride in his community and he has lost one of his most stabilizing and valuable possessions. The town for him becomes merely a grab-bag out of which to snatch financial prosperity before he passes on.

Yet who can blame the modern young executive for snatching as he can and as fast as he can when his only chance for family stability, even for staying in a community any length of time, lies in having enough money to be independent?

The local society values him more for what he has, for the money and prestige he can bring, than for what he is. The one question that is asked about the newcomer, whether in New York, California, in Ohio or Texas, is not "Who is

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he?" or "What can he do?" but "How much has he?" Upon his make of automobile, the location of his apartment, depends his reception in local society.

His standards of working and living change imperceptibly from those he had been brought up to believe were the basis of success. The disturbing conviction is forced upon him that it is not alone the Horatio Alger qualities of honesty, perspiration, and dependability which will get him ahead, but the surface gestures of making a brilliant showing, knowing the right people, being able to carry his liquor well (incidentally much of the hard drinking in business circles is the rather pathetic attempt of people with different standards and different backgrounds to find a common comradeship), and finally and most potent, luck . . . and more luck.

What has he got, this homeless young executive? He has a larger salary than his father. In spite of high living costs the young man of to-day has on the average a larger real income than his father did at his age. But he has also a disquieting sense of instability. The father was well established for life when he got to be an executive; the son does not know what the morning paper may do to his job. While his father enjoyed a slowly growing prestige in the community, the son is always getting ready to live. He has hundreds of acquaintances and very few friends.

It may be that the next generation because of this very restlessness will become more cosmopolitan than any before. But it may well be at the expense of the development of that cultural background which America has long been accused of lacking. Art and literature flourish best when there is a chance for getting their roots deep in the soil from which they grow. And there is certainly little opportunity of that unless business allows the young men and their families to make a place for themselves in the communities where they settle. It is hard to believe that the present race of glorified commercial travellers which characterize America can ever maintain a stable American tradition.

Destroy a Day

By Alfred Kreymborg

Destroy a day and you destroy an immortal ring,
And each small crawling prayer when you are old
Can never bring a thing as fair out of the wintry mould
Of earth to rise to your side and sing.

I've known a doting girl and boy whose pulses ran
So many frenzied miles ahead of a mortal plan,
Ill-tempered words led to a word among dark trees,
Scattered their lives along the tide where lone things freeze.

Ah for a passionate heart and head in unison,
The dual genius night and day of moon and sun:
If youth and truth had only rhymed in time,
She might have said, he might have said instead
What is now too late to say—and oh how dead.

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Why Hard Times?

BY ROYAL WILBUR FRANCE

Only a little while ago we were in the midst of the greatest bull market of all time. The magic of dreams was there, just as the black magic of depression is on us now. The dreams have disappeared, but the mystery of what has happened remains with us.

The fundamental difficulty is easy to understand even though it may be beyond the present capacity of our intelligence to control and correct. Put simply, it is this: we are poor because we are so rich. Until comparatively recent times the history of man's life has been a struggle for food, clothing, and shelter. Within our own lifetime conditions have changed to a point where the whole business structure is collapsing under the burden of overproduction.

Fundamentally, however, it is not overproduction at all but an inability to distribute what we produce. It is no longer a question of enough to go around. We keep thousands of bushels of grain locked up in granaries, wondering what to do with them, while five million people starve to death in China. In America millions suffer unemployment and poverty while the looms and machines which could enrich us all lie idle.

What the industrial system which we have built up obviously needs if it is to continue to function without recurrently buckling up is increased and sustained purchasing power. When Henry Ford announced his minimum wage of five dollars per day he was on the right track even though he was denounced as a madman by many of his fellow industrialists. But Mr. Ford has not solved the problem. Purchasing power must not only be raised but it must be sustained. The Ford plants have thrown men out of work as ruthlessly as any at the very time when unemployment was reducing the purchasing power which industry so desperately needed.

We speak glibly of the prosperity of America as though the average American were so well off that he couldn't possibly consume anything more. Even so brilliant an economic observer as Owen D. Young in a recent address intimated that we had reached the limit of our domestic consuming power and that the only hope of disposing of our surpluses lay in the expansion of our foreign trade.

What are the facts? The National Industrial Conference Board has estimated the minimum income for a family of five to attain the comfort level in the United States to be in the neighborhood of $2,100 per annum. More than 80 per cent of the families of the country are not securing that amount of income. A comparatively recent study shows average annual earnings of farm employees to be $736, coal miners $909, factory workers $1,148, workers in transportation industry $1,286, Pullman-car porters $1,260, employees of express companies $938. Taking the results of the income-tax returns for a number of years past it would appear that less than 4 per cent of our people have incomes in excess of $10,000 per year and that less than one-half of 1 per cent have incomes in excess of $30,000 per year. The average annual income of all families in the United States is well under $2,000 per annum.

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It is clear that our supposed prosperity in the best of times is neither widely nor evenly distributed. Prosperity in the sense of an adequate income for the present and security for the future does not exist for the great mass of the American people. Yet we have an industrial machine capable of turning out almost unlimited wealth, slowed down to less than 50 per cent of capacity because of overproduction. Overproduction is a misleading term. What we are suffering from is underpurchasing power. That is a sounder phrase to get into our national subconscious mind.

Fundamentally the problem is one of national organization. We would like as a people to have more money, more leisure, and above all greater security for the future. There can be no security for the future unless we can find a solution of the problem of distributing the wealth which we are learning to produce. We have had in the neighborhood of four million men out of work this year. At the rate at which improved machinery is displacing labor, we shall have eight million unemployed by 1940 unless we find a way out of our dilemma.

Russia is attempting the solution of the problem through production and distribution centrally planned under a national dictatorship. Italy, less thoroughly and from a different angle, is following much the same lines. But there is something repugnant to the American mind in the destruction of individual initiative involved in such an extension of the functions of government.

What then is the solution? Along what line should we progress? Is there a middle course which will preserve the spirit of American individualism and prevent a bureaucratic governmental control of our economic life and at the same time meet the pressing problem of better co-ordination of production and distribution so that the wealth now easily available may be more widely and equitably distributed?

With the kind of competition we have had in the past no solution seems possible. The situation demands the payment of higher wages, the shortening of hours of work, the elimination of child labor, and the creation of unemployment insurance and of old-age pensions. It demands employment and higher wages for all workers so that purchasing power may be both maintained and increased.

Few individual concerns are in a position to increase wages and shorten hours unless their competitors do likewise.

Therefore agreements between competing concerns for a whole industry to raise wages and shorten hours cannot be expected unless our antitrust laws are changed to permit agreements on price. This degree of co-operation might lead to monopolistic prices and involves the substitution of social control of price-fixing in place of the present prohibition of the Sherman law.

Equally important from the standpoint of keeping purchasing power constant is steadiness of employment. Fluctuations of employment, resulting from overproduction and consequent shutting down, can only be overcome under the competitive system by permitting co-operation between competitors to study their total market and produce rationally for its requirements. This the law now prevents.

If higher wages merely meant an increase in costs and consequent higher prices so that there was no gain in real wages, such efforts would be futile. Such should not be the result. Wages are only a part of costs and in many industries the smaller part. The real answer, however, involves a discussion of the wastes of competition which could be elimi-

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nated through intelligent co-operation. A discussion of the savings which could be effected through standardization and simplification in industry, through uniform costs, through technical co-operation, and through other forms of co-operative effort would lead us too far afield. But the elimination of some of the unnecessary wastes of competition would more than offset any increases of wages paid to labor. With intelligent co-operation, wages could be higher and costs lower. Through co-operation, we could develop the buying power of the economically backward peoples.

Instinctively American industry seems to be taking the line of integration. New mergers and combinations are a daily occurrence. Despite a constantly better organized opposition by the independents, the chain stores are gaining. Trade associations are mitigating the harsher aspects of competition and bringing competitors into closer relationships. Unlimited competition is obviously disappearing before our eyes. Shall we try to restore it by bringing the Sherman Act out of the closet, dusting it off, and sending it out refurbished and strengthened to pursue the malefactors who have dared to combine? Could we restore the old conditions of competition if we would, and would we if we could? Around these questions the battles in the field of politics and in the realm of economics are likely to rage for some time to come. The problem will not be ignored and we have to be prepared to take sides.

We need leadership and a programme. Was Mr. Hoover overadvertised or does high office cloud a man's vision and sap his courage? If one man will not lead, some one else will be found who will; for the necessity for action is pressing. Solutions will not wait except at the expense of hardship and actual suffering which, in a period of potential plenty, we should not be forced to endure. Capital and labor, producer and consumer, farmer and distributor, all alike now see that something is awry in our economic situation. Can it be set right or must we await the slow, grinding processes of time to achieve the comfort and prosperity which are peering out at us from idle looms and overstocked granaries?

Seeking the maximum benefits consistent with the common welfare, we should first inquire whether there can be a self-regulation of business which will provide greater co-operation and more scientific management of industry without invoking governmental control. The American genius is for organization. Is it possible for business itself to face squarely the problem confronting it and work out solutions which will render socialistic experiments in government unnecessary?

Under wise leadership and with the appropriate changes in the law effected to permit it, the problem of the limitation of production to the requirements of the situation and the fixing of price could largely be solved by industry itself with a minimum of interference on the part of government. The business organization of the country could take the form of—

1. Associations between competing producers for the determination of their costs, the ascertaining of their total market and the volume of goods necessary to be produced to meet it, and the fixing of prices which would provide for fair wage scales and fair margins of profit.

2. Associations between wholesalers and retailers for the purpose of presenting an effective offset and counter-balance to the associations of manufacturers.

3. Joint trade relations committees

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consisting of representatives of the manufacturers associations and the wholesalers and retailers associations who should meet to discuss the fairness of the rate of production and of the prices fixed by the manufacturers.

4. The Federal Trade Commission acting only as a final check when producing and distributing groups are unable to agree or when, on investigation, it appears that the agreement reached has failed to take the public interest into account.

All meetings of joint trade relations committees should be open to representatives of consumers' leagues and others representing the general public, and in case of collusion appearing to enhance prices unduly, complaint could be made to the Federal Trade Commission. Presumably as the technic of this self-regulation of business developed the number of cases actually referred to the Federal Trade Commission would be relatively few. They would decrease in number as the fundamental problems of cost accounting became better understood in each branch of industry. The kind of bargaining that took place would take into account the factor of greater purchasing power involved in higher wages and would recognize that if business as we know it is to survive, capital must have a fair return.

Grave questions arise with respect to any programme. With co-operation developed to this degree, with the practical disappearance of the kind of competition that we have known, will business remain efficient? What remains for individual initiative? Where does the better product come in if all the concerns in an industry are going to be operating on a common price basis? Can the manufacturer of the poorer product sell it at all unless he sells it cheaper than his competitors? These questions cannot be answered academically. There is no simple solution to any complex problem. There is an instinctive feeling on the part of business that the old cut-throat competition has failed to solve the problem satisfactorily not only from the standpoint of labor and human relationships but from the point of view of the safety and return of capital as well. There have been too many failures, too much waste, too much loss of time and effort. Instinctively business is combining for greater strength and security. We do not have to settle out of hand all the problems that the greater integration of industry will present. What we do have to decide is whether the tendency toward combination is good or bad. Shall we try to stop it now or shall we let it go on in the hope that a better economic organization may emerge and that we shall have the sense to develop the necessary social controls as we go along?

We have reached a new stage in human development. We are no longer confronted with lack of goods but with an abundance, which, if we are to utilize, requires that we change our psychology and construct our business organization along more scientific lines. If we can solve the problem scientifically, we shall have increased the average well-being, reduced the fear of future want, and made available a larger leisure and greater possibilities of human happiness than the world has ever known. If we fail we may expect at best increasingly violent recurrences of the panic of 1929 as overproduction becomes ever more serious in relation to purchasing power; and at worst, chaos and revolution. There is no problem more worth solving. It requires the co-operation of many minds and it cries out for a new kind of leadership.

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A story by the author of "Arm's Length"

The Spanish Hat

BY JOHN METCALFE

The heat, along the sun-baked road, was gruelling, and Gilbert Suthery took off his hat to fan himself. His donkey, sensing instantly its master's languor, again subsided into that cynical, that openly contemptuous, semblance of reluctant motion which for nineteen kilometres in every score had been the best that blows and curses could extort. Gilbert swore wearily, flapped wildly with his hat at a fandangoing swarm of flies, and, swinging his leg backward, bestowed upon the beast's hind quarters a half-hearted kick.

What was he doing here, astride a chocolate ass, pricking so mournfully, romantically, across the eastern Andalusian landscape? "What had he eaten?" Well, he had eaten those salchichas at the last posada and they had energetically disagreed with him. And, actually, the ass was not even a decent chocolate, but of a disagreeable cocoa-powder tinge. . . . Yet the color, incredibly, had pleased him only yesterday, when he had bought the creature for Heaven knew how many pesetas he would never see again.

Finding that his fanning was merely making him considerably hotter, he angrily replaced the hat upon his head.

The hat, a replica of one which hung incongruously with modish velours, glossy "toppers," and fastidiously selected bowlers filling two rows of pegs within a wardrobe far away in Clarges Street, was of a sombre brown. Its model was severe, consisting of a disk surmounted starkly by the frustum of a cone. Around the frustum's lower circle ran a double cord of the same shade, knotted upon one side into a bow.

A Spanish hat.

Gilbert, recalling vividly that moment when he espied it in a window-front in Algeciras, and, equally, that later moment when he had sottishly gone in and bought it, swore softly. Damn the hat! It was the hat, he realized with an anguished feeling of illumination, that was responsible for every folly that succeeded it—the hat, and, possibly, the deadly strumming of Vicente Carreaga's band. . . .

As for the hat, there had been nothing to distinguish it from half a dozen more save that peculiar shade of brown. Gilbert, observing it, had felt a twinge. Yes, it was like that other hat, the old one he had come upon in going through his trunks from the depository some months ago, and should have burned. When he got back he certainly would see that it *was* burned.

There was a mirror in the shop-front, at such an angle that Gilbert, looking at the hat, was almost forced to contemplate his own reflection. He had seen what, on this occasion, gave him something of a shock. He had seen a man, of

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middle age, and passably well-dressed —in fact, *well*-dressed—of medium height, the face clean-shaven—p'r'aps a little pasty round the gills these days—eyes a blue-gray—but he was getting pouches underneath. . . . Figure—well, for his time of life, the figure wasn't bad. A tendency, agreed, to *embonpoint*. How many years since he had worn that hat? Twenty—no, twenty-four. Good God, he'd soon be ranked among the "well-preserved"!

It was getting darkish, almost chilly. An evening breeze sprang up, and Gilbert turned against it, from the shop, muttering to himself: "A 'well-preserved.' " He repeated the odious phrase as he walked back to his hotel: "Good God, a 'well-preserved'!"

Then, as bad luck would have it, he had heard Vicente Carreaga's band. A sudden rasp of sound, blown to him up a side-street from a square. There were lights, a lot of them, and dancing. Should he go and listen?

Standing at first upon the outskirts of the crowd, he soon was so hemmed in that a retreat was rendered difficult. But for a while he had no wish to go. The music discomposed, affronted him, yet still he stayed. Bah! What a racket! What did these fellows mean? What were they getting at?

Presumably, they were getting at him. It was, he calculated with a growing sense of injury, twenty-four years exactly since he had listened to this sort of thing. The music was coeval with the hat—and as ingratiating. What was it like? A phrase rose strangely in his mind, "Tigers in love." Its claws were into him. No velvet there. Something untamed and keen, despairing of itself, of everything, tearing its heart out, grinding out its soul, a woman stabbing an unfaithful lover. . . . "Tigers in love."

Fate, so it seemed, had taken curious pains to engineer the thing meticulously. Carreaga's name was known all over Spain, but this was actually the first year he had left his native Catalonia to make a tour through the southern provinces. So much for destiny, had Gilbert thought derisively. He himself had crossed through Andalusia twice in the last dozen years, but only as a bird upon the wing, and following beaten tracks. He had been accompanied by boot-trees and a trouser-press, a valet, and a Truefitt's atomizer. The crude savor of the country had been denatured and refined, nicely diluted to a reassuring suavity. The raw sting of it he had till now escaped. . . . Well, he had better go; his luck was out to-night.

On and on. People were threading in and out, halting, heels stamping, going on again. And what was that? The beat had changed once more. . . . No, it was not the jota after all. And yet, that tune! He knew that tune. And castanets! Now might the Lord deliver him, he certainly must go.

Gilbert had gone abruptly. Where was that shop? He entered drunkenly. "A hat." "What hat?" "This one!" He had seized it, flung down a note, and staggered out again, not waiting for the change.

And in his hotel bedroom he had tried it on, groaned at himself disgustedly before the mirror. He was a fool—looked one at any rate.

He had sat down then upon his bed-edge, feeling suddenly tired and alarmed. Why had he bought this hat which he could never wear? Why had he listened to that music, let it get under his skin? His brain was humming still to its queer, bounding rhythms, its abrupt, melancholy reprieves, its rent, ecstatic chords . . . the *rap-rap-rappa-rap* of stamping heels.

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This was serious. At this rate there was no telling where the thing might end. He had realized, almost exultantly, that to be quite consistent with the purchase of the hat he must abandon every plan elaborated for the next six weeks, forfeit his passage, duly booked and paid for, from Gibraltar, send on his trunks without him to Southampton, go himself . . .

Where should he go? It seemed to Gilbert that in that case he must go to Spain.

And, for his pains, in Spain he found himself, really in Spain instead of merely Cosmopolitania, cursing his donkey, sweating in the heat.

Gilbert looked about him, shading his eyes with his hand. For the last hour he had been ascending a valley that wound interminably between two swelling outspurs of the eastern range. But now he was at the top, or very nearly. The foothills were scorched, a sallow brown; here and there only did they show a dim sage green. Farther on, ahead, he could see rolling uplands, the long, white gleam of an estancia, a line of aloe plants in flower and a grove of myrtle.

This country, indeed, with its grave, melting lines, its paradox of sheer voluptuousness within austerity, oppressed him sometimes as a resurrected dream. In spite of his discomfort, present weariness, it could excite him like the springing back to memory of a forgotten face, disturb him, secretly dismay him, and beguile.

Yesterday he had been almost too careful to prepare for disillusionment. He was a fool, agreed, but definitely knew himself for such. He would repent of this, and rightly.

He had taken a motor-bus to Villafranca, breakfasted at an inn. At first he had intended continuing on foot, but three kilometres beneath a blazing sun had speedily convinced him of his madness. He had turned back to the town, meaning to hire some sort of carriage. That would take him most of the way, and for the rest—well, he could so arrange things as to walk it in the evening or the early morning when it wasn't very hot.

Then, however, he had bought the donkey. A mule would have been better, but he had fallen to a piece of idiot sentiment. The ass he now bestrode, this ass whose color and behavior filled him today with nausea and abhorrence, had been cantering—yes, actually, it had been cantering then—within a ring of hurdles on a common. Its eyes, wistfully sullen, reminded him of one he used to ride rather a long time back, and he had paid, undoubtedly, a fancy price. Carreaga's band had led to the hat, the hat to the purchase of a worthless ass, the worthless ass would lead him—whither?

Not very far, apparently, in any measurable space of time. Gilbert had dawdled past Niebla where the river ran blood-red and yellow-ochre, seen castles pendent over the sheer swoop of precipices, and a wild sunset flaming angrily through clouds of dust. He had arrived in Spain.

Toward evening he reached a village where there was an inn. The sharp, rough wine at supper made him shudder and grimace, and afterward, in bed, the fleas had bitten him all night. Next morning, for all that, he did a desperate thing. He asked his landlord if he couldn't be rigged out in something—something a bit more suited to his purpose than the clothes he wore. Those he would leave behind, collect on his return. The man had looked at him mistrustfully, but brought him what he wanted—more or less. The new garments were snuff-stained and shabby but

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had fitted passably. What did it matter that, as he departed, there passed, significantly, with tappings of the head, the whisper *"loco"*?

He had ridden on, past cork groves, hedges of prickly pear. Numberless magpies, "showy" and hard as posturing ballerinas, flew chattering off as he approached. High up, another bird, much bigger, had hung motionless. A kestrel or a falcon.

And, wide around him, permeative of every gesture of his mind, lay the unuttered scenery of Spain. But, Gilbert reassured himself, it could wring nothing from him now, it couldn't rattle him. He had some sense of humor, anyway.

Long ago, certainly, he had approached the Spanish scene upon more level terms. He had fitted, not incongruously, "into the picture." It had stood for an enthusiastic way of living which at that time was well enough, but which, meanwhile, he had rejected and outgrown. Twenty-two and forty-six were very different stories, and at the latter age he knew what was appropriate.

At his next halt, however, a curious stroke of chance had tested him more keenly, turning his thoughts into a fresh and perilous channel. This accident, coincidence, at first unrecognized as such, was in itself the merest trifle, and for some time did nothing, in his consciousness at least, to modify his resolutions. It was only after he had cast the crumpled sheet of paper carelessly away that Gilbert started anxiously, knew that his face had paled. . . . And even then he did not fully apprehend what he had read, admit in it relation to himself.

Aware of some intently silent scrutiny, he raised his eyes. Upon a cork branch something large and black was fixed, brassily staring.

It was a bird—a raven. Gilbert looked up at it and laughed. *"Quoth the Raven, 'Nevermore.'"* To see it perched up there so stagily amused him, flattered him subtly with the consciousness that fate, if this were fate, had rather overdone the properties, not reckoning with his British sense of humor. Kicking his ass, he plodded on again.

What was it, actually, that had disturbed him? The paper had been wrapped round the salchichas, part of an old news-sheet, and he had glanced at it abstractedly before throwing it away. If he had only sat down to a meal at the posada he never would have seen it. Once more, "So much for destiny!" but this time his derision was a little forced.

The item which had suddenly attracted his attention was an account of the confession of a crime committed almost thirty years ago. The fellow had murdered somebody, had got away with it, and lived, apparently, a blameless life for upward of a quarter of a century. Then, at the age of seventy or so, he had incomprehensibly confessed, gone to much trouble and expense to prove that he was guilty, and literally placed his neck within the noose. That had been curious enough, but what gave picturesqueness to the whole affair was that the relatives of that long-murdered man had somehow got at the assassin while he was being led to jail, done him superfluously to death with axes, and then calmly gone themselves to prison in his stead.

What idiots, all of them! Gilbert was pleased to find he had no sympathy with folly of that kind. In any case, it wasn't his affair.

But yet, unreasonably, the matter troubled him. Gilbert perceived that it had raised a problem; rather, had brought to light a problem present all the while without his knowing it. Or,

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had he known? When he had gained the top of that long valley path and tried to fan himself, he had, unconsciously, been pondering this question. It became pressing as he resumed his hat, and he had answered it with vigor in the negative. No, honestly, he hadn't dreamed of that; the thought had never crossed his brain. It was this cursed hat. The hat alone had been responsible for everything.

He pursued his journey, putting a hand up now and then to wipe the perspiration from his forehead. But it was cooler now, and presently, beyond the second farm, his course would change so that the sun would strike him sidewise and more tolerably. It wasn't far—another hour's going at the most, and after that . . .

Already the country was familiar. He could see a long line of eucalyptus, a stream-path leading to a dismantled flour-mill, even a large fig-orchard that he remembered very well. He recalled the fig-orchard with especial clearness, for it had been the scene of a dispute, ending in blows, between himself and a youth called Miguel Cascales, who at that time had been—well, yes, a sort of rival. Gilbert frowned and looked backward, shading his eyes. The mellowing light gave to the view a curious ethereal, flooded quality. It had about it something biblical, a kind of—how to put the thing—a kind of godly, Sunday-yearning look. Or, more unearthly yet, it was a fabulous, Jack-in-the-Beanstalk land, another world entirely. . . .

His shadow, lengthening before him, became monstrous and grotesque. Upon the sky-line the mute, solemn shapes of hills were set in a remote severity, graven in sleep, like figures brooding, caught in a stern dream. The air grew sharper. Gilbert dug heels into the donkey's sides. He wouldn't turn back now!

And, once again, he thought of the paper, what he had read in it. That chap, whoever he might be, had cut his life in two. The break must have been pretty clean, to save his skin. Then, through that idiot confession, he had quixotically returned, forced himself back upon his old life, willy-nilly. It couldn't help accepting him again. The police and those impatient ones with axes saw to that.

Gilbert pressed on. One other turn, the stony path along a river-course, and he was there. A few faint stars were out. He checked his ass before a wide, low house, entered a cobbled yard. There was as yet no light within. Dismounting, he walked up to a broad, wooden door and knocked.

He had not long to wait. A light sprang up within, moved toward him, and shone finally in a thin horizontal blade below the door. A key grated, and a cracked voice inquired: *¿Quien esta? ¿Que desaya?*

The abrupt glare was dazzling. Gilbert believed that he had recognized the voice of him who held the lamp but not the face. What he could so far see of it was unfamiliar. This discrepancy so disconcerted him that for some seconds he made no reply.

"What do you want?"

Gilbert, pulling himself together, now spoke calmly: *"¿Hay una posada aqui?*—an inn, where I can eat, and sleep—I've lost my way."

The man confronting him was old, wore breeches tucked inside black woollen stockings at the knees, and a short dark-green jacket. His hollow-cheeked, gray-whiskered face suggested something which too consciously had undergone deterioration. The watery blue

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eyes filled suddenly, began to twitch. Gilbert, regarding them, had, without actually exclaiming, the feeling of an exclamation.

"My brother's out. He'd be the one to know. . . . Perhaps there is an inn . . . but I don't think so. Oh, dear, it's so unfortunate that Jaime's not at home!"

Yes, this was old Enrique Muñez after all. Those twitching eyes, and then, to settle it, the reference to the brother, Jaime. Gilbert said casually:

"I lost my way, as I told you. It's getting dark, and naturally I must find some place for the night. I——"

He stopped, too painfully aware of what, within himself, the studied lightness of his tones concealed. Here—after all these years! Beyond Enrique he could glimpse the entrance to the parlor, the passage to the kitchen, the wide, shallow staircase with its spidery rails. . . . And farther, where his glance had not yet had the chance to penetrate, he was still able to imagine. There was no need to see. His sudden sense of the house, as of a person, became overpowering. He had been crazy, been a fool to come. . . .

Enrique was mumbling, repeating to himself: "Naturally. . . . It's getting dark and you must sleep somewhere. . . ." He had been holding his lamp to Gilbert's face, and now, appearing reassured, stepped back and smiled. "Of course . . . but I'm afraid there isn't anywhere, unless"—he hesitated, then continued—"unless you'd like, perhaps, to put up *here*—that is, if Jaime is agreeable. . . . But rest at any rate until he's back, and—wait, though, there'll be your horse. He can go in the stable . . ."

"Not a horse; only a *burro,* and a bad one. Thank you, I shall be very grateful for your hospitality."

Gilbert, followed by Enrique with the lamp, tied up the ass within the stable and returned.

"Now you can rest. You must be tired —and thirsty."

They passed into a wide, low-ceilinged room—the dining-room, Gilbert remembered with a pang. The brick floor, smoke-browned rafters, whitewashed walls; the sparse, plain furniture and its arrangement—just the same. Even the clock, its case carved curiously with snakes and goats, was ticking still its own uniquely sumptuous tick. And something else. Gilbert drew in his breath. That smell! More authentic than either sound or vision, it had assailed him as he stood within the hall, a heavy, warm, and slightly musty fragrance. Here it was stronger. A savor, an aroma, linked with this house forever, unforgetable. Whatever it was, however actually compounded out of garlic, soap and leather, olives and wine and burning wood and vinegar and Heaven knew what besides, it had come, perhaps grotesquely, to be a sort of finally collective essence. It was, in his nostrils, the intimate distillation of Spain, of all that Spain had ever meant for him, was capable of meaning for him now.

Everything just the same—except Enrique. He, it was true, had changed deplorably. His gait was shuffling, and his hands, as he set out the glasses on the table, trembled violently.

"You're foreign, aren't you? An Englishman perhaps——?"

"No, I'm—American. I lived in Spain when I was young."

Sipping his sherry, Gilbert was conscious of the burden of postponed emotion. Presently it would be necessary to think things out, but for the moment he was not prepared to try himself too high. He wasn't meant for this. . . . That paper! And the problem it had

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seemed to raise! Enrique, anyhow, would hardly have the strength, if he possessed the will, to go round slashing people with an axe! Jaime, of course, the younger brother, might be different. . . .

Abruptly, Gilbert was constrained to stir himself, start, tingling, from his melancholy lethargy.

He had been drinking with Enrique for some time when the old man, grown garrulous, chanced to make reference to the owner of a neighboring farm. This man had been replacing slates upon his roof, had been blown over in a violent wind, broken three ribs, and died.

"What, is old Ruiz dead? I—" Gilbert had checked himself too late. Enrique's eyes showed instant curiosity. "You knew him, then? *¿El señor ha sido aqui antes?* You have been here before?"

"Yes, a few months. Not here exactly, but at Higuera. I had some business once with Ruiz."

"That must have been, let's see, quite twenty years ago that Ruiz died. . . . Things have been changed since then. . . . We've all changed. . . ."

Had Enrique guessed, become suspicious? Gilbert at first thought not, for now his eyes had dulled, his voice grown vague. Presently, however, he continued reminiscently: "We had a foreigner here once, an Englisman. It was through Ruiz that he came to us. He was under my brother, a sort of pupil, to learn the wine business from Jerez. . . ."

Gilbert was conscious of a breathlessness which made his tone less casual than he wished as he replied:

"Oh, an Englishman. What sort of a man was he?"

Enrique shrugged. "He? Oh, that man was well enough. A pleasant fellow in his way. He had his faults, like most of us. . . . That wouldn't interest you though. . . ."

The conversation passed to other topics. Gilbert felt faint. Night had fallen, and how long must he sit here, on thorns, and thinking churchyard thoughts, awaiting Jaime? "That wouldn't interest you though." . . . For an instant he was seized by a wild impulse of protest, unreasonable indignation. He heard his own voice beginning: "You know, when I was here before, and Ruiz——"

But Enrique stood up abruptly. "Wait. We can talk of that another time. I think I hear my brother . . ."

There were steps and voices—more than one—along the hall. Gilbert rose stiffly. During the last half-hour he had realized that though this ordeal was severe the worst was yet to come. There had been a question which, he knew, could not be long delayed, a question which, in spite of all that properly should hold his tongue, it had been very difficult to keep from asking. Something had, narrowly, restrained him. Fear, or the springing of a hope far less excusable, his "sense of humor." And now, at last, he was to learn the answer. He waited, his limbs trembling.

The door opened. Jaime. But it was not at him that Gilbert looked. Beyond Jaime, visible momentarily as she advanced toward the light, stopped suddenly and then retreated, there was some one else. He had caught her voice a second previously, knew that it must be she. Now that he saw her face he unconsciously moved forward, framing his lips to speak her name—"Jacinta."

She was gone. On seeing him she had vanished, and he too stepped backward. He could hear her walking down the passage to the kitchen.

Enrique was talking. "A stranger . . .

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I thought that we could give him supper and a bed . . . if you agree. . . ."

The door was closed. Gilbert was replying to Jaime's greeting.

Did his face look as stricken as he felt?

The effort now required of him was supreme. He had to concentrate, use his last ounce of energy, to keep his features reasonably composed, his posture light and naturally relaxed. It was a definite relief when Jaime motioned him politely to a chair.

He sat down, wondering if his face were "screwing" too atrociously. Surely they must have noticed! Or was that swift, significant exchange of glances merely his imagination? Well, then, the thought came darting, tempting him, what if that were so, did it matter much? Hadn't he read that paper, come here, really, to "confess"?

But he would hold on for a little if he could. And no dramatics! "The soft pedal . . ." A voice, gentle and deprecating, breathing the shy, reproachful spirit of the Albany and the St. James's Club, stirred in his memory. Who had said that? Yes, it was Hansonby, melancholy in lilac-tinted gloves, elastic-sided boots. "The soft pedal, old man, always the soft pedal . . ." Strange to have thought just now of Hansonby.

He came back to the slow ticking of the clock, to the dim lamp-lit room in Spain, the brothers talking. . . . Jaime, he now observed, was changed as well. His clothes were earth-stained, old. Whatever Gilbert had been hoping, fearing, to discover in his face was gone.

Enrique rose, mumbling, "I'll go and see about . . ." He broke off to whisper something to his brother and then hobbled out. Jaime rose too. "Perhaps you'd like to wash . . ."

They passed up-stairs, along a corridor. Jaime had lit a candle. "This will be your room. Forgive the smell. . . . It's only stuff to keep the moths away. I hope the bed's all right. It used to be my sister's once upon a time, but now she's in the other room just opposite. It gets more light."

Gilbert, washing himself, attended but fragmentarily. In the pauses between Jaime's words he could hear other voices in the kitchen. She was still there, doubtless preparing supper. When he went down again she would be in the dining-room maybe, or wouldn't she? If she had recognized him, as he thought, she might make some excuse and stay away. . . .

"Well, I must change these clothes. I'm on the roads, an overseer with the *Peones Camineros*. It makes one rather dirty."

Gilbert, at last alone, finished his washing and moved toward the door, but halted on the threshold and looked back.

Her room, Jacinta's room, or had been at the time that he recalled. And, just across the passage, facing it, his old one, where, as her brother had informed him, she was sleeping now. Somehow this trifling rearrangement had distressed him, conflicting with the vision he had caught of her as she was standing in the hall, the vision of a loveliness in every detail unimpaired. Strangely, it would have been much easier to bear if she had altered too, like Jaime and Enrique, shared, if however slightly, in their too-obvious decay, the failing fortunes of this house. Instead, unless that instant's glimpse had seriously misled him, she was the same, incredibly, as he had known her when she was a girl—or hardly more. It was impossible . . .

He stood staring, head bent, at the floor, but in a little while recalled himself. Jaime was shouting up the stairs. *"Cena . . .!"* He must go down.

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Steadying himself, he descended. The dining-room door was open, and before entering he noticed with a twinge of mingled disappointment and relief what he had half expected. Only three places had been laid.

"Come in. I was afraid your soup would cool." Jaime had changed his soiled clothes for a black suit. Gilbert took a seat on his right hand, facing Enrique.

"It isn't often that we've company. In the old days it was a different thing. . . ." Enrique, sipping sherry, echoed mournfully: "No, no, we don't see any one. Things have been changed since you were in these parts with Ruiz. Everything's changed. . . ."

Throughout the following pause Gilbert was conscious of constraint. Jaime, instead of questioning him concerning Ruiz, maintained a chilly, seemingly indifferent silence. Enrique, as if realizing rebuke, looked downward at his plate.

Did Jaime know? If so, why keep up the pretense? Perhaps they were both waiting until he himself . . .

The soup was done. Gilbert was not entirely surprised to see Enrique rise, collect the empty platters. Where had Jacinta gone? Why hadn't she been introduced, allowed to show herself, appeared at least to wait on them and bring in the fresh plates?

He was upon the point of asking Jaime, making some reference which should compel an answer, when he heard voices just outside the door. Enrique talking with Jacinta. There was the sound, apparently, of footsteps going up the stairs and of the chink of china. Almost directly afterward the old man entered with a dish of peppers and broiled pork.

The meal continued. Gilbert's appetite was gone. Once, to make conversation, he embarked on a narration of the incidents which had befallen him upon his journey, how he had taken the wrong turning to Fuente and had lost his way. Jaime, though listening with polite attention, offered no remark. His manner, if not actually incredulous, was curiously abstracted, and presently he began to talk of something else.

Supper at last was over. Enrique, from a cupboard, had produced cigars, and for a while they sat and smoked, almost in silence. Before long Jaime rose and stretched himself. "I have to get up early. You must excuse us if we go. But there's no reason why you should disturb yourself . . ."

"No. I'm tired too." Gilbert got up. "I'll—I'll see you in the morning."

"Yes. You'll see us both to-morrow."

They ascended the stairs together and paused a moment on the landing. "Well, then, good night—and pleasant sleep."

"Good night." The brothers disappeared along the corridor. Gilbert more slowly made his way to his own room.

Within, he gave a long-drawn, dejected sigh, altering it more consciously to a deliberate whistle—whew! So that was that—and now, well, what to do about it now? Ye gods! This was a pretty state of things indeed.

But meditation had to be postponed a little longer yet. He had barely set down his candle when he heard one of the brothers—Jaime, he thought—returning along the passage, stopping and knocking softly, not at his door, but at that other, facing his. It was opened, and for a few seconds there were whispering voices, one of them hers, then a low *"Buenas noches,"* the closing of the door, and finally the steps retreating, back along the corridor.

This interruption lasted scarcely a minute, but, after it, Gilbert was forced to seat himself upon his bed, could feel

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a prickly moisture starting on his skin. This wouldn't do. He got up, took off his coat, his collar, and his tie and then sat down once more.

To think? No, thinking wasn't going to help him lots—not thinking in this kind, at any rate. Too much self-scrutiny would prove expensive here. This mess was ghastly enough without that. He must get out of it—or deeper in?

Moonlight, pouring its brilliance through a panel in the shutters, fell in a flooded patch upon the floor. He stared at it, frowning, for a long time, until, realizing his too-fascinated pose, he turned his glance away, framing his lips once more into a silent whistle. "Our hero now discovered himself up against it." Even here, seemingly, that obligation to a cynical or humorous point of view pursued him. Safeguard or handicap, he didn't know.

But, after all, it would be necessary to think, forward as well as back. Downstairs the clock struck huskily, nine, ten, eleven. . . . What, actually, did he mean to do? Particularly, and for instance, and for the sake of God, why didn't he undress?

The sensible and obvious course no doubt would be to get to bed, have a good sleep, and, on the morrow, say good-by politely, ride away. Whatever Jaime and Enrique might suspect, they certainly would not prevent his doing that. Anticipations of a bloody vengeance had been somewhat too theatrical, high-flown. . . . Then, back in town, he thought, he could be wiser and perhaps not very much the sadder for this episode. He wouldn't let it permanently cramp his style.

Apart from that, the one alternative appeared a trifle too bizarre. It would mean, at the least, considerably more kicks than ha'pence, making himself a more stupendous fool than he had proved already—which was saying much. No, at his time of life he couldn't well afford a passage *presto e fortissimo*. He'd better follow Hansonby's advice.

Still, he was driven to admit that to do so would be inordinately difficult. Against his instinct of self-preservation must be set that instant's glimpse into the hall, beyond the opening door. His misfortunes at that moment when he had recognized Jacinta had attained their climax. Until then, apparently, he had forgotten a good deal about her, how very much he used to be in love with her, and what a devastation it had been to say good-by to her. Now, however, he could remember all these matters with extraordinary clearness.

Yes, there'd been fireworks in plenty then. . . . It wasn't his fault that he had to leave the way he had. He had been coerced by the pressure of events, his father, other things besides. When he had gone away it had been with the full intention of returning. Indeed, he had promised to come back. . . . But then, somehow, he had delayed. London had caught him, and it had turned out harder than he thought. His behavior, in unwilling retrospect, had seemed less and less a thing he could be proud of, his abandonment of Jacinta at that especial juncture more and more like an ignominious scuttling-out, a wanton dereliction. Rather than try to repair it belatedly, he had found it easier to forget.

And now, she was here, asleep in his old room, across the passage. Two hours ago he had heard her talking at the bottom of the stairs and then ascending them, taking her supper with her as the chink of china made him guess, though that, he thought, was strange. She was there, actually, only a few yards away from him, unchanged. . . . It couldn't be that she was—how old?—

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forty-one. Perhaps he was mistaken after all. . . . Perhaps that vision of her had deceived him. If he could catch one other glimpse of her, somehow creep in without disturbing her and watch her while she slept. . . . He had begun to untie his shoe-laces, but now arrested himself suddenly, stayed motionless. Perhaps she wasn't sleeping. Perhaps she was awake and looking out upon the moonlit night, beyond the balcony. Perhaps. . . .

He started and sat up. That balcony! He had forgotten that. He was trembling, aware of something, an expanding possibility, which he was anxious not to recognize, trying to put away from him.

But this he could not do. His sudden memory of the balcony had chimed too nicely with his feverish mood. It was a temptation which grew stronger every instant. And sleep, at least, was now out of the question.

Should he or shouldn't he? The house was silent. He could move so softly that the brothers wouldn't be aroused. And if they were, if they discovered him "red-handed," well, that, at any rate, would bring things to a head. He looked up at the rafters. Yes, the trap-door was there. . . . In his socks he needn't make a sound.

The ceiling was so low that, with a chair upon the bed, he could exert a steady upward pressure with his shoulder. Presently the trap-door yielded. He turned it quietly over on its hinges, dragged himself through the opening, gained the roof. The abrupt night air was fresh, but, sweating, he was yet unconscious of its chill. Well, he was in for it at last, it seemed. Good-by to the soft pedal now at all events!

Walking to the other side of the flat roof, he peered downward. Yes; that would be her room. There was the balcony, not far below. This was an exploit which he had frequently performed in the old days. Would he be equal to it now? By letting himself over the coping he could find foothold on the grilling of the window. Then, from the balcony, supposing that that bar were missing still! . . .

He had done it, was standing, panting, just outside the window. He was in shadow from the moon, but it was light enough to see—and he could also feel—that in the iron grating there remained a gap.

Perhaps the panel would be open too, and if so he might glance within, possibly strike a match, or even call to her. No good retreating now. He must——

Suddenly his blood ran cold. A light!

The panel all at once stood out before him, an illumined square. It was above the level of his eyes, so that he was unable, without stretching, to look through it. He could, however, hear a voice, unsteady in alarm: "Who's there?"

So she had been awake, or been aroused. He gathered his courage, whispered toward the panel: "It's me; it's—Gilbert."

Within, there was a faint sound like a choked exclamation. Presently came the voice again, a single question: "*You . . . ?*"

"Yes, yes. It's me. I—" A wave of giddiness came over him so that he had to clutch the bars. He felt, not so much present fear as the chill, prickling intimation of some fear upon its way, a curious, freezing doubt. "Jacinta, I——"

He listened, in an agonized intentness. By a slight effort he could have raised himself and looked inside, but for some reason did not wish to do so. Jacinta's footsteps were retreating from the window. And—what was that? She was talking—to some one else. There

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was another person with her in the room!

After all, he was about to bring his face against the aperture when, from within, there came a further sound. Voices, fresh voices—Jaime's and presently Enrique's—then, after that, the noisy opening and closing of a door.

"Where is he?" Jaime had crossed the room, threw back the shutters to confront him. "Come in. There's a bar missing. No doubt you thought of that!"

He clambered through. Jaime, in an overcoat, was holding a candle. His face wore an expression of severity. He spoke in a restrained tone, level and almost casual, but with dignity: "We remember that you had those habits when you were here before, but it's peculiar to act in this way now. It seems that you've forgotten—a good many things." Presently he added: "I'll let you out into the stable for your donkey—when you've got your coat on."

Yes, he would go, but it required neither Jaime nor Enrique to set him instantly upon his way. Beyond the brothers he could see what in any case would render their rebukes unnecessary. Now if indeed they had but fallen upon him with axes, knives, he would have offered slight resistance to their wrath. . . .

Jacinta—or the girl that he had taken for Jacinta—was sitting up in bed, regarding him in painful fixity, her lips compressed. And, standing near her, with a dressing-gown thrown hurriedly about her nightdress, was—Jacinta too. He could perceive it now. The real Jacinta, who had whispered to him through the window, *"You?"* Her face, though pale and worn, retained sufficient purity of outline to be considered beautiful, yet, in immediate contrast with that fresher loveliness so close to it, was but the faded shadow of his memories. In her eyes was a strained, shrinking wonder, sterile and blankly denying to the intense interrogation of his own regard. He looked from one to the other of the two women for some moments dazedly. Between them, he could see, must be a score of years at least. There could be little doubt of their relationship.

"Our sister is an invalid. She had an accident after her child was born. Your staying here won't do her any good. That's partly why we didn't tell you when we—guessed. . . . We hoped for her sake that there needn't be a scene like this. Probably you mistook . . ."

Jaime had opened the door. "I must ask you to be as quick as possible."

Gilbert walked out into the passage. In his room he stood drunkenly awhile, then, recollecting himself, put on his coat, collected his belongings, with a feverish haste. He must get out of this; good God, he must get out!

But, following Jaime on his way down-stairs, he was overcome suddenly by a new reflection, something which, touching him so nearly and so hideously, it was as well, perhaps, he had not fully realized until now.

That girl—the one he had mistaken for Jacinta—she was . . . No, if he thought of that he would go mad. They would have told him that! Admitted it in word or gesture, made some reference . . .

Jaime brought out the ass. "You know your way. . . . Be careful, or you're going to fall. . . . Here, then, I'd better help you up. You've aged as well. It was foolish of you to act as you did . . . but then, of course, the English are like that—romantic. . . ."

His tone was calm, prosaic, perhaps faintly derisive.

Gilbert, as he rode out into the night, made no reply.

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II

At the inn, he was surprised and much relieved to find his suit intact in a brown-paper parcel. The homely atmosphere of Saville Row which it exhaled did a good deal to comfort and to reinforce him.

It could not, however, lessen his feverish impatience to be gone entirely from Spain. He had been travelling night and morning without sleep, and only rested at the inn for a few hours in the afternoon. Then, having tried and failed to get another donkey, he journeyed on again. In two hours he should reach Tres Hermanos, where there was a railway-station.

The cork groves and the yellow rolling downs, the distant shapes asleep against the sky, filed past him and behind—the same, he must admit, relentlessly and never-endingly the same, as he had known them on his outward way. If possible, he would have travelled by another route and have avoided the repassing of these landmarks. Now, as he encountered them again in a reversed sequence, he was compelled to recapitulate and to disparage the emotions which had sprung from them on the day before.

So recently as that his journey had been a romantic pilgrimage. He had set out upon it making wry grimaces at himself, but, all the while, he had been tantalized. He had had the idea of holding a pistol at the head of the Spanish landscape, forcing it somehow to receive him, place him "in the picture," but it had now retaliated on him in a frightful fashion he had not expected. In particular, the behavior of Jaime and Enrique had humiliated him more utterly than he was ready to admit. He had aroused, not indignation, but cold wonder, even indulgent condescension. "The English are like that . . ." It was he who had been blatant, childish, "stagy," he who had perpetrated a deplorable and puerile solecism which, in allowance for his curious ignorance, the brothers had not found it worth their while to punish too severely.

But, worse than this, remained his memory of all that he had seen within Jacinta's room—what he had thought of afterward on going down the stairs. That other girl, the young one, who had been sitting up in bed, Jacinta's daughter, as the resemblance which had first misled him was enough to prove. . . . Well, he would leave it there. A further question as to her identity roused in his mind a doubt so intimate and so appalling that for a time he was unwilling even to consider it, far less to scrutinize it closely. Perhaps, in leaving as he had without a word, he had done something rather more ignominious and shameful than he definitely knew. . . . The fields, the evening downs, were blotted, became black before his eyes, in nausea. No, it could not be so. They would have let him know. Jaime, for all his coldly restrained scorn, could not regard him quite so cynically as that—Jacinta, too. . . . If that were true, then it seemed probable that nothing he could do would ever give him peace again. His idea of himself would be so permanently injured that he could never find a grain of pleasure in it any more.

It was this doubt, so corroding to the last remnants of his self-esteem and so refractory to all his efforts at explanation or evasion, that prompted him, when on the following day he had reached Algeciras, to send a letter back to Jaime Muñez. Its composition cost him two hours of feverish writing in his room at the hotel and at least half a quire of spoiled note-paper. It had also entailed, previously, a visit to a bank.

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After leaving the bank Gilbert felt even more strongly than before that Spain no longer could contain him. Having posted the letter, he had found out that there was a boat sailing for England from Gibraltar the next morning with one berth still vacant. He would have reached London more quickly overland, but would have had to spend another day in Algeciras waiting for the train.

Back in Clarges Street, however, a week later, he found the answer to his letter. Apparently that *had* come overland, wasting no time. The mauve-and-green slip that was his check fell out as he opened it, but he did not stop to pick it up. He read fearfully, his color changing:

"We think you should know that our niece is the daughter of Miguel Cascales, whom you probably remember. Our sister was married to him shortly after you left, but he caught a chill the same winter and died before his child was born. We are, to be sure, not so prosperous as when you were our pupil in the wine business, but we have saved enough to make it certain that our niece is well provided for . . ."

Gilbert replaced the check and letter in the envelope. That fellow—that Cascales . . . ! Well, he had troubled himself needlessly, it seemed. He walked over to the tantalus and took a drink. This news ought really to relieve him. Supposing it had been the other thing! Yes, he felt better now. Of course, he *was* relieved. . . .

But his relief, he found, had curious concomitants. He had read Jaime's letter in the morning, and its contents began to work on him in ways he could not understand. He had a lot of business to get through that day, but, after dawdling over an expensive lunch for which he had no appetite, he could do nothing but hang miserably round his rooms and then stroll listlessly about the Park till dinner-time. It was as if he were suffering from a profound shock, as if something really terrible had happened to him. He became seriously concerned at his condition.

Later, in the evening, he went up to his bedroom and prepared to carry out a duty which was now imperative. He would, indeed, have seen about that hat before, but the affair had been less simple than he thought. There had been absurd difficulties about the destruction of the hat, for he had had to give an unconvincing order for a fire in the middle of July, and to get rid of Huskisson, his man.

Now, however, he was alone, and the fire had been lit. The hat took a long while to burn, and even after it was quite consumed retained its shape—the glowing simulacrum of a hat. Gilbert, with profound distaste, had to take the poker and shatter it.

Fragments of its sullenly disintegrated substance relapsed deadly among the embers, or sailed, with heavy glitterings, up the chimney, typifying the dissolution in his mind of what he once had counted as the glamour, the high tragedy, of Spain.

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Is Christianity compatible with "civilized standards of living"? A minister in a forthright article tells how.

A Countryman's Religion Come to Town

BY JOHN THOMAS STEWART

THERE is something about the complicated machinery of modern life which is an affront to Christian faith. Let us be fair. . . . How can a man live decently on the American scene, support himself and dependents, and yet preserve that simplicity of life which the New Testament demands? "A man must live," we say. He didn't create the exacting complications of modern life; he is their luckless heir. How could he live without being anxious for the morrow? What would happen to his dependents if he failed to lay up treasures upon earth?

Plainly the fate of our spiritual ideals is bound up with the question of the modern organization of human life. The typical American family faces a soaring standard of living which lays down yesterday's luxuries as to-day's necessities. A bare recital of the items in a family budget of comfort is terrifying. All the paraphernalia of modern life—granted that Jesus despised it, who can escape the burden to-day? Only a tramp or an imbecile. Is there, then, hopeless disparity for the Christian between his ideal and his practice? Has the New Testament ideal of the good life gone the way of the stage-coach and spinning-wheel? No; the hopelessness of the problem is more apparent than real. There is actually a way of escape, and it lies open at the point of our desires—where we should logically expect to find it.

II

It is a rare and a very wise person who knows what he needs. This is strange but true. So rare is such a person that one almost despairs of finding him. We are aware of our wants but not of our needs. Our needs are concealed from us under a multitude of wants. Yet no man or woman can be permanently, chronically happy whose wants exceed his needs. Let us get this matter straight, for it is the soundest wisdom of the race. Not the wisdom of Christ and the Gospels only, but of Socrates, of the Chinese and the Greeks, the wisdom of philosophers and sages and poets, the happy wisdom of the wise—the wisdom of all men and women who have ever taken time off to do a little thinking. They have discovered that the prayer of wisdom is: "Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the food that I need." That is to say: "Lord, deliver me from the misery of distraction."

Our wants are usually unanalyzed (consult any volume of psychology published within the last thirty years); we accept them without criticising them.

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This is how they get their power over us. But our needs are fundamental to life, as food is necessary for the body. No man can hope to be happy who does not have what he needs; but he might be happy without having all the things which his neighbors or his social set or his generation or his family or the advertisements tell him he must want.

According to the Gospel a man's needs should exceed his wants—a teaching that is flatly contradictory to everything we understand by "civilized standards of living"; the Christian's faith in God should lead him to assume that his *needs* will be fulfilled, and at the same time this inward assurance that all will be well should lead him constantly to criticise his *desires* from the standpoint of the question as to whether those desires represent actual needs or merely vanities.

But somebody will object: "I really *want* all those things which make up the comfortable modern existence. I may not need them, but I must have them in order to be happy." Maybe you do—too bad for you. If you must satisfy a multitude of desires in order to live happily, you will go dissatisfied, you will live in a vicious circle—each satisfaction suggesting a new desire—you will suffer "physical exhaustion, mental distraction," and you will be poor in spirit. You will wear yourself out, not to mention what you may do to your husband or wife or children or friends. But by following such a course you cannot truly say you are living your own life. You are playing a rôle. You are trying to live as you think other people expect you to live. Have you no mind of your own? Is there nothing in life for you but striving for what others tell you you must want? Have you no needs which belong to your nature? The Christian way of life demands neither poverty nor riches, but it certainly demands character, and character is what the person is, not what he has.

Every normal person has a standard of living, that is, a way of life that is congenial to his tastes, and he ought to make all reasonable efforts to maintain his existence at that level, making sure the while that he himself does not boost the ante with every stroke of good fortune. But it should be *his* standard of living; it should express his own mind and soul. Otherwise it is a species of hypocrisy. Of course, no man will ever know what his needs are until he takes time to think about them, to decide for himself what they are. And he will never be in position to have his needs fulfilled unless he has decided once and for all, and in his own mind, what they are. I verily believe—and it is no part of my religious faith—there is not a man alive who could not swear that those individuals, those families, who live within their means find their means increased. This is not magic, nor the workings of a kind providence, but simply the purchase of thrift. There is such a thing, as everybody knows, as wasting so much on wants that the plainest need goes unsatisfied, as when health is sacrificed for pleasure, family solidarity for social promotion, or a child's right to a normal child's life for its parents' pride.

III

In the teaching as well as example of Jesus the primary expression of a man's faith in God is the simplicity of his manner of living and the humility of his mind and meekness of his spirit. This inescapable element is what gives the Gospel the power to inspire sainthood as well as controversy. "We must be careful to remember," says a British theolo-

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gian, "that 'meekness' in popular use has lost its nobility: the Greek word (New Testament usage) describes a strong man's self-discipline and a wise man's humility."

Simplicity—and the American Protestant churches have never understood this—*simplicity is as Christlike as love.* It is that personal quality of the Master himself which strikes the modern as most unreal, unnatural. We are so accustomed to the pushy person that it never occurs to us he may be unnatural, the product not of primary force but of secondary circumstances. Saint Francis seems queer to the modern hustler: one wonders if Saint Francis would have regarded Babbitt as normal. It is fundamentally a question of desire, a measure of the extent of a man's wants. The Christian saint criticises his desires from the standpoint of his needs; the modern estimates his success by the amount of desires he is able to satisfy. Which is wiser?

The Roman Catholic Church, whose universal service of the Latin Mass does not allow for discrimination among worshippers or any taint of respect for persons, has had far greater success inculcating simplicity among her people. That church deliberately invokes the striking examples of the saints to promote this most rare virtue. But Protestantism, with an exaggerated emphasis on reform, has laid a premium on showy virtues. So we have cut our spiritual garments to fit the pattern of the person who does not criticise his desires but expects the world to fulfill them. But, if the Gospel be true, such a man is not only guilty of pride, he is also the victim of supreme folly. For the world and the God of the world never promised anybody to give him all he might want. Such a foolish promise in the beginning would destroy character, it would destroy energy, it would make lumps of clay as precious as diamonds and a baby of no more value than a mountain of clay. But we can create values in the world, and by the simple, wise process of seeking those things which are of most value to us. There is no other way. . . . This is the meaning of art. There would be no art in the world if one thing were worth as much as another. Art is the supreme expression of a scale of values. So the good life is an expression in the moral world of a scale of values. The same law puts happiness above pleasure, honor above success, and kindness above selfishness.

The countryman was always ideally the man of simple tastes and simple desires—not a simpleton but "simple-minded." He was not afflicted with envy of the neighbors. It never occurred to him that he needed others to tell him what he wanted, and this spared him tons of worries. He longed for a few things in life beyond bare existence and was willing to work in order to get them. Living on a small, tight scene he was more likely to assess the world from his own standpoint than to disparage himself from the standpoint of the vast world, which meant he was healthy-minded and not given to soul-sickness. He did not utterly spoil himself for this world's uses, such as food, drink, and sex, by biting off more than he could chew. If his limited means forced him to live in a cottage he did not try to deceive the neighbors by driving a fancy carriage. The only political doctrine he held without reservations was that he was as good as any other man. This worked both ways. His solitariness and his wrestlings with the elements made him an ideal subject for religion. He believed what he believed for no other reason than that he thought it was the truth, which is far easier than under-

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taking to compel one's self to believe what others believe because still greater numbers of people profess to believe the same thing. He was the backbone of American Protestantism as well as the stabilizing force in citizenship.

Now does anybody doubt that what we need most in American life to-day is just that sterling independence of character? We can abide with its occasional intolerance better than we can dispense with its unfailing integrity. We need it desperately if Protestantism is to recover its moral and spiritual hold over our people.

The situation of a people grown prosperous and that of a pioneer population struggling under terrific hazards and hardships for their daily bread are poles apart, and it would be absurd to say that the change in living conditions has no effect on religious beliefs and practices. As a matter of unpleasant fact our Protestant churches are making headway only in prosperous urban centres where we are building costly churches of a Catholic type of architecture and spending enormous sums on frankly competitive programmes, while whole sections of our rural population, once the stronghold and still the source of supply of American Protestantism, are left without any respectable religious services whatever. For example, my own denomination, oldest in America, has practically abandoned the rural Middle West, concentrating its efforts in the large cities. An old religious tradition that began on the stern and rock-bound coast of New England seems unable to thrive except in lovely suburban surroundings where life is elegant and advertising pays. "The Puritan soul is in danger of being drowned in fat."—Professor Steiner.

Take a map of the country, draw a line about the sections where Protestantism preponderates, then mark the spots where we are building splendid churches and raising funds, and what have you? . . . Two worlds; one small, compact, and prosperous; the other vast, struggling, and neglected. And the pseudo-Christianity which embellishes the luxurious lives of our prosperous suburbanites, barring the name, bears no more relation to Jesus Christ than to Mahomet or King Tut.

The liberal wing of Christianity is now engaged in the vain task of undertaking to preserve the lovely sentiments of Jesus without his underlying convictions. But it was never easy for any man to think one way and act another; such bland hypocrisy usually is confined to speech. The man who does not have Jesus' faith in God as his kind heavenly Father who looks after the needs—not the wants—of all his creatures, simply cannot live as Jesus taught. The world will be too much with him. Whether if the man had such faith he could live in the Christian manner on the modern scene is the theme of this paper.

IV

The most provoking, most difficult element of the New Testament for the modern is not its moral demands nor its theology, but its disregard for property and success. Jesus' denunciation of wealth and his lack of respect for property and personage strike us moderns oddly. But in order to appreciate his point of view we have first to grant his major premise, that all social organizations and all material accumulations are made for man and not man for them. Now Jesus was a Jew and had far more of the Hebrew's worldly wisdom than sentimental Christians have usually appreciated. He thought he knew the truth about life and the world, and he was en-

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tirely unwilling to compromise that truth in order to make the comfortable more comfortable, the conservative more conservative, and the proud prouder. It was not the rich man's wealth which brought down Jesus' condemnation and warning; it was the rich man's preoccupation with his wealth, which revealed itself in pride and unbrotherliness. Man was not made for property but property for man. Jesus knew that a man will give himself to the things which he desires, therefore his Gospel begins with the desires. Every desire is criticised on the basis of an actual need. This isn't theology but common sense. The Christian is a free man, being the slave of nobody, of nothing. But who can be called free in the United States of the second quarter of the twentieth century?

This, the ancient problem of simplicity *vs.* a worried, harried existence (Socrates in the fifth century before Christ was acutely aware of the conflict), is a problem for every individual and family. Just to admit this at-home application of the tough problem is to take the first step in its solution. The trouble with most of us is that an avalanche of advice, more ingenious than disinterested, has confused our scale of values; we have lost all sense of distinction between necessities and luxuries (a luxury is something which has value only because people can get along without it), between goods and shams, pleasure and recreation, integrity and pride, honor and emulation. For those millions burdened with debts and tense under nervous exhaustion, they must be willing for a time to play the part of a rustic at the fair. It will only be for a time, then that "grand and glorious feeling" of being the world's equal will come.

We cannot reduce the elaborate organization of modern life but we can steadfastly refuse to be stampeded. We can stubbornly cling to that autonomy of the individual or family life which made heroes of the pioneers but which in our case will be all the more interesting and rewarding because of the glaring contrasts it will throw up. We might begin by taking stock of ourselves, as we vainly imagine other people have been doing for us. They can't do anything about our situation anyway; we might. This problem which arose out of our religious ideals, inherited from another age, another hemisphere, comes down in the end to the sensible ordering of the material pursuits of every day, for it is in the ordinary affairs that we are in danger of losing those spiritual ideals. Simplicity is a state of mind and a quality of the soul: it is that critical faculty of the individual which gives him Christian character. It can live at many levels of human life but cannot as much as gain admission to a distracted mind.

SCRIBNER'S MAGAZINE *brings many revealing articles on religion to its readers. To appear soon are: "Protestantism and the Cities" by Tertius van Dyke, an article supplementing this one; "Jesus: A Replevin" by Charles Hall Perry, author of "The Hebrew Advantage" in the November* SCRIBNER'S; *"The Legacy of Israel" by Lloyd Douglas, another view of the effect of Judaism.*

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Brothers

BY ROBERT HAZARD

I was delayed getting back to the farm and had to stop at a strange farmhouse and ask if they could put me up for the night. They made me welcome and had a couple of vacant stalls in their horse-barn for my team.

They were rather poor, shiftless farmers. There were a lot of children. The mother looked overworked, and the man looked worried and worn out. His horses were poor stock and in bad condition. There was a whole pack of thin, hungry dogs running about the place. I wondered why he didn't kill them off. Why let them live and starve? He looked rather wistfully at my team. Jerry and Betty were French coach stock, dark bay, well built and well kept, and intelligent. I worked my horses hard and fed them well; they had all they could clean up, of the best. I never asked them to do more than they could, and they never failed me.

It was with relief that I took the road the next morning. Some miles down the road I discovered that two of the dogs had followed along under the wagon. They looked like pretty well-bred collies, but they were only about half-size though mature, thin and shaggy and wolflike. I tried to drive them back, but they circled around and stayed with me. Finally I gave it up and when I got home they were still under the wagon. They slunk off into the corn-field and I didn't see anything more of them that night. I put up the team and fed them.

When I went down to feed the team the next morning I found the two dogs in the horse-barn lying in the hay in front of Jerry's and Betty's mangers. They slunk out of the barn as soon as they saw me, while the horses tossed their heads and went "hunh, hunh, hunh" in expectation of breakfast. After breakfast I called the dogs from the house to give them something to eat, but they didn't show up, so I took a pan of scraps down to the horse-barn for them. They wouldn't come up to eat, but as soon as I got ten feet away they went at it and wolfed it down. I tried to make friends with them, but it couldn't be done. They wouldn't eat until I got a certain distance away, and they never thanked me.

They always slept in front of Jerry's and Betty's mangers, and wherever Jerry and Betty went, they went. I named them Bill and Jack. Bill usually ran behind the team and Jack ran in front of the team. If I was ploughing, they would follow the team out to the field, and after I had made one round they would lie down under the hedge at the corner of the land and watch us go around and around, and when we knocked off and went to the house, they followed. When I had hauling to do on the road they followed the team, no matter where I went.

They got into lots of fights with other dogs along the road. They always trotted along very meekly and looked an easy mark for the other dogs. Jack, being in the lead, would be attacked first. He never seemed to see the attack coming—kept on going straight ahead—until they were right on him and then he struck and surprised them. If they were big dogs, or if there were several of them and Jack didn't drive them off immediately, Bill would slip around from behind about the time all their attention

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was concentrated on Jack and attack from the rear whatever dog Jack was facing. That manœuvre always broke the spirit of the enemy.

I remember one place where a huge mastiff, pretty near as big as a small Shetland pony, came leaping over the hedge, followed by half a dozen lesser dogs, to attack Jack. He didn't appear to notice them as the mastiff bore down upon him, and the mastiff hesitated just a little bit before striking, and Jack had him by the throat. He had waited until the enemy's teeth seemed to be within an inch of him before he showed any recognition of their presence. The mastiff thrashed him around, trying to throw him off his feet and break his hold, and the other dogs edged in on Jack. My heart was in my mouth watching him. One got within a couple of inches of his haunch before he let go of the mastiff and whirled and struck him and whirled back and struck the mastiff again. Then the other dogs closed in and it looked like it was all up with poor Jack, when Bill took the mastiff from the rear. As he yelped and half turned Jack slashed his throat. He headed back over the hedge, with his tail between his legs and his head down, about four times as fast as he came out, and the rest of the pack followed him.

They never attacked other dogs, but for all of that there was a continual commotion when we were on the road. I was afraid of getting into serious trouble with the neighbors over them, but it was such a circus to watch them and there wasn't any way to keep them from following the team, so I let it go.

I got a hired hand who had an intense affection for animals, and he tried every way he could think of to make friends with those dogs. If he could get them in a corner he could pet them, and the dogs wouldn't bite, but they wouldn't wag their tails nor look pleased, and they would slink off as quickly as they could. I would have liked to have had friendly dogs around the place that I could have used when driving the cattle, but as long as I had Bill and Jack there was no use to get any other dogs, and so we went on for some two or three years.

Then Sally said that something was making off with eggs and chickens. I watched and finally caught Jack coming out of the hen-house with an egg. He snarled and ran for the horse-barn. I went into the house and got the pistol. There is no use in monkeying around with a dog that gets after the eggs and chickens. I have never seen any one have any success in breaking them of it. I walked down to the horse-barn, and as I approached the door Jack ran out and into the edge of the corn and stood half turned watching me. I held the pistol up and shook it and said: "Jack, next time I'll kill you." I didn't quite have the heart not to give him one chance.

Everything seemed to be all right for a couple of months, and then one morning I saw Jack running out of the chicken-house with a hen. He dropped the carcass and ran for the horse-barn again. I went in and got the pistol and walked down to the horse-barn and, as before, Jack ran out as I approached and made for the corn. Just as I was ready to fire Bill came out of the barn door straight at me. I fired and swung the muzzle of the pistol just in time to plug Bill. The force of the bullet stopped him in mid-air as he leaped, and he dropped at my feet. I had got him right between the eyes and he only quivered a little. I had got Jack just back of the shoulder and he only went a couple of jumps from where he was struck.

I went up to the tool-house and got the spade and buried them behind the horse-barn.

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As I Like It

BY WILLIAM LYON PHELPS

HENRY R. LUCE, the able and accomplished editor of *Time*, writing as an individual citizen in *The Saturday Review of Literature* for Oct. 27, 1928, made the proposal that instead of tinkering with further amendments or with the repealing of amendments to the United States Constitution, a Convention be called to write a new one.

I do not know if or how this could be brought to pass; but if such a thing should happen, I have a few suggestions. The Constitution under which we live was fashioned in the year 1787; and although there is nowhere in the world today a statesman equal in ability to any one of half a dozen of those Americans who built our Constitution—still, 1787 was lang syne, and possibly the twentieth century requires some changes. After all, it may be the British are lucky in having no written constitution at all, as the Quakers are lucky in having no written creed.

First and foremost is the Electoral College. My suggestion for this is like my other suggestions that will follow; there is not the remotest chance of their being adopted. This is not why I suggest them; I believe in them so sincerely that I regret their merely academic quality.

Do you know I really believe in the Electoral College? I mean in the College of Electors as conceived by the framers of the Constitution. I certainly do not believe in a pure democracy; the most wasteful and inefficient form of government known to humanity. Instead of counting noses to see who will be the next President, I should like to see an Electoral College composed of (say) Elihu Root, Charles Evans Hughes, Calvin Coolidge, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Learned Hand, James M. Cox, John W. Davis, W. Cabell Bruce, Newton D. Baker, Edward M. House, and let them get together and choose a President.

Or, as a two-party government seems to be the most natural and effective system, either in a constitutional monarchy or in a republic—I should have the Republicans and Democrats (if we must continue to use names that have ceased to mean anything) respectively select a group of able and high-minded Presidential electors, and leave it to the successful Committee to choose a President.

Of course this is a counsel of perfection; I suppose the Electors would all be pledged in advance to vote for a certain man. But I wish they might be free. I should like to leave the matter in capable hands.

If it is impossible to elect Electors who shall in turn elect a man, then I hope this new Constitutional Convention will do away entirely with the cumbrous and absurd Electoral College; and let every state vote directly for the nominee.

I would have the President elected for a term of eight years, and be ineligible for re-election. This would make him actually the President of the whole country, instead of a party leader; and he would be free to do what he thought best

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for the welfare of the nation, without even the faintest hind-thought of how it might affect his chances for another term.

I would have United States Senators elected by the State Legislatures, instead of by popular vote. The amendment that changed this is one of the worst. There is no doubt that the Senate has suffered degradation since this method of election came in. Under the old system, there were occasional cases of bribery, though not many. So long as we could fix the responsibility of choosing Senators on a small group of men, all of whose names and votes were known and recorded, the quality of the Senate was kept up to a fairly high standard. To-day, it is a conservative statement to say that the Senate of the United States does not command the respect of the people; and this is truly a fearful condition of affairs.

But, far more important than that, I would not require either a Senator or a Representative to be a resident of the State which sends him to Washington. This would accomplish two things most devoutly to be wished; it would raise the level of ability in both Houses at Washington, and it would make it possible for any able statesman, whether Republican or Democrat, to continue in public life, and thus allow the country to have the benefit of his brains and experience.

We are now, as we have been for many years, in a vicious circle. Surely money should not be the chief qualification for public office, and yet any man who seeks a political career without being independently wealthy is foolish. I should never advise a young man to "enter politics" unless he is rich.

It will appear from my wish to abolish the residential requirement that I do not regard a Senator or a Representative either as a rubber stamp or as the political agent for his constituents. He should always be free to vote directly against the majority of his constituents, if he sincerely believes the welfare of the nation demands it. When John L. Sullivan announced himself as a candidate for Congress from a certain district in Massachusetts, he said, "The business of a Congressman is to get all he can for his constituents; who can do that better than me?" He stated, in his customary manner, the real belief of many people.

A first-rate man, even if he had not resided in that particular State or district, could easily discover the legitimate needs of his constituents; and being a first-rate man, could more easily obtain what was necessary, than a vulgar political agent. The needs of any State could be attended to more efficiently by a man like Elihu Root or John W. Davis than by some inexperienced resident.

I believe in a representative government rather than in a democracy; I should like to see municipal, state, and national affairs placed in the hands of capable men and women; what would happen to private business, factories, etc., if our present political methods were adopted?

As it is now, a man may be a Senator or Representative of twenty years' experience; and then, by a turn in local sentiment from Republican to Democrat, or the other way, he is suddenly without a job. The country is deprived of his valuable services, and he, in middle age, is left without means of support. This happens with such distressing frequency that no young man should enter the field of national politics without an independent income. The country and the State of New York lost the services of Senator Wadsworth when he was at his best; Delaware and Maryland retired to private life Senators of first-class ability, Mr. Bayard and Mr. Bruce.

And under the evil system of Prima-

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ries (another "reform") it is not necessary to have the State change from one party to another; all it has to do is to change from one candidate to another. This very summer we had an instance of that in Michigan. The Hon. Louis C. Cramton had represented the Seventh District in Congress for eighteen years. He is a man of first-rate ability and unimpeachable character; and his experience has enormously increased his usefulness. In the primaries, there was an unexpected overturn, and an untried man received the nomination. The vote was so close there is to be a recount; but the returns show a new man, and Mr. Cramton, without an independent fortune, and with a wife and children, is retired to private life.

But without the residential requirement, the political party and the nation would not have to lose the services of Wadsworth, Bruce, Bayard, and Cramton.

If we could abolish the residential requirement then with it I would abolish two things. I would abolish the primaries, which now force every candidate to make two campaigns and involve disastrous expenses; and then, I would abolish the money business entirely, by making it illegal for a candidate for a Federal office to spend anything whatever toward his election.

When John Stuart Mill ran for Parliament, although he had money, he refused to spend a penny on the campaign. He said that political office should be open to every man of ability and character, without regard to the amount of money he possessed.

We have become callous to political corruption in the United States, as we have become callous to murder. But it seems to me that when a candidate for the United States Senate spends two hundred and fifty thousand dollars to secure a nomination in the primaries, we are in a dangerous situation. A seat in the Senate becomes as expensive as a seat on the Stock Exchange. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.

No American should vote who cannot read, speak, understand, and write the English language easily; if such a thing belongs in the Constitution I would put that in.

So far as the liquor question is concerned, I will repeat what I have said before. I do not think this question, in spite of the universal excitement over it, to be a matter of supreme importance. I would leave it to the Constitutional Convention.

Furthermore, if the States and the Congressional Districts were free to choose the best men in the party, then we should take a long step away from merely sectional feeling, a danger by no means forever settled by the Civil War. Whenever one section of the country feels that it is not being treated fairly by the majority, there will be talk of separation and of secession. Such talk originated in New England, during and after the War of 1812; it raised its head again during the war with Mexico; it took four years of civil war to "settle" it in 1861–65; in 1896, some of the Western States openly used the word secession, and no student of history will forget the dramatic episode, when Senator Teller walked out of the Republican Convention. And now Senator Brookhart calls on the West and South to unite against the East.

Of course open constituencies would not eliminate sectional feeling, but such a system would help toward moderation. A man is indeed an optimist if he thinks there will be no talk of separation in the future.

The only two logical parties in a republic or constitutional monarchy are

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Conservative and Liberal, or, if you like, Radical. It would take the genius of a Daniel Webster and the subtle eloquence of a Gladstone to make clear to a foreigner what is in 1930 the essential difference between the Republican and the Democratic party. Are the Republicans conservative and the Democrats radical? Then how about LaFollette, Norris, Brookhart and the *bloc?* Does every Democrat believe in Free Trade and every Republican believe in a high tariff? How about the Senators from Louisiana? Are the Democrats "wet" and the Republicans "dry"? Then how about Nicholas Murray Butler and Dwight Morrow? Are the Democrats for State Rights and the Republicans for Federal Control? But the Federal Income Tax was a Democratic measure, supported by all the Southern States, when some of the New England States voted against it. This tax allows a Federal officer to enter every home, and to inquire into every corporate and individual business. When this Income Tax was passed, State Rights died and were buried.

An American father and his English daughter have made the year 1930 memorable by two books, alike in only one respect—they are irresistibly appealing. Ralph D. Blumenfeld, one of the leading journalists of the world, was born in Wisconsin, but has lived and worked in England for more than forty years. He now publishes "R. D. B.'s Diary" (American title, "In the Days of Bicycles and Bustles"), which begins in London with the Queen's Jubilee on June 21, 1887, and closes in London on August 4, 1914, with the declaration of war. His prodigious success as a newspaper man is unconsciously made clear in this note-book. There is not a single sentence without "human interest"; and the volume as a whole makes an invaluable record. His candor and honesty are shown in the fact that he preserves his fallacious prophecies along with those that have been realized. And what a faculty for observation! I wish every newspaper reporter in the world could read this book. His tact and judgment are all but infallible; he must have been foreordained as a newspaper man.

Mr. Blumenfeld has reigned in Fleet Street for many years; his honesty and ability gave him important enterprises from his youth upward; matters of national and international importance were placed in his hands. I myself should be a little less and a good deal more than I am, if I were able to look at life with a mind so completely free of prejudice, if I were interested only in what people do, instead of being interested in what I think they ought to do. This is a magnificent book; and Arnold Bennett's superlative praise of it is justified.

It is the social and political history of an entire epoch, and we are taken behind the scenes. He stood in the jam at the foot of Haymarket, as the Queen passed, while in the window, where he had a place but could not reach it, sat James G. Blaine.

Mr. Blumenfeld does not hesitate to record snubs, and shows that Gladstone had no fear of newspapers. He saw the Grand Old Man on the street, and since he had previously been admitted to intimate conversations with him, he regarded this chance as providential.

"Good day, Prime Minister. I—" "Go away," said the P. M., without looking up, and walked on. I stepped alongside, and said:

"But, Mr. Gladstone, you don't appear to know me. I am Blumenfeld, of the *New York Herald,* and I would like—"

The old man stood still and glared like a ferocious lion.

"Go away, I tell you," he added. "I don't know you. Don't bother me," and stumped on.

Long hats for men and long skirts for

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women appeared to be immortal; the first time he saw women smoking cigarettes and drinking cocktails he supposed they were some of Mrs. Pankhurst's legionaries. He made an incorrect prophecy concerning Stanley Baldwin, whom he met in company with Kipling, and an accurate prophecy on young General Byng. What people thought of the nerve-shaking speed of the new horseless carriages (fifteen miles an hour) is duly recorded. And there are many striking portraits of men known all over the world.

Simultaneously with this diary appears the first book of Mr. Blumenfeld's daughter, Josephine, a collection of short stories, called "Shrimps for Tea," of which the first tale, which gives its name to the volume, is the least in merit. One of my rewards for reading so many new books by unknown writers is the occasional finding of admirable work like this. Josephine Blumenfeld is a literary artist. I do not see how any one can read these short stories without being deeply affected. She has inherited her father's powers of acute observation along with creative talent of a high order. It will not surprise me if this young woman becomes famous.

Two books of pictorial beauty: "The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam," copiously illustrated in color with full-page and other pictures by Willy Pogany. The introduction is by Professor Saintsbury. Never since Elihu Vedder's "Omar" have I seen this poem so attractively illustrated. A little erotic, perhaps, but so is the poem. Omar expresses the philosophy that millions follow without knowing they have a philosophy. Ninety per cent Fitzgerald and ten per cent Omar, so far as the poetry is concerned.

Sterne's "Sentimental Journey" appears in a new edition, illustrated by Vera Willoughby, and printed at the Edinburgh University Press. It is limited to two thousand copies. This tall volume is exquisitely printed and how I wish the author could have seen the pictures! The Reverend Laurence Sterne is the only man of genius who was a sniggerer. There are many sniggerers but they are not men of genius; there are some men of genius, but only one was a chronic sniggerer.

To turn from artistic sniggering to the joyous mirth of parody, let me recommend to all readers of S. S. Van Dine, which means everybody I know, a delightful parody called "The John Riddell Murder Case," by "John Riddell" (Corey Ford). The authors included in this burlesque are prominent and numerous; and they ought not to mind having their jackets dusted, since the same publisher that produces Van Dine produces this parody. The illustrations, by Covarrubias, are brilliant; after all, with such bludgeoning blows and such terrific pictures, the authors will suffer; they cannot help it. But inasmuch as there are always more readers than authors (incredible as it may seem) and inasmuch as most people enjoy burlesques of persons outside their own family, we may as well enjoy this screaming farce without any reservations. It is "horrid fun."

The muchbepraised "Angel Pavement" by the clever Englishman, J. B. Priestley, I like only here and there. The descriptions of the river and of London streets, especially that scene where the snowstorm begins, are thoroughly competent work. But the story is too long and too diffuse, the characters are drawn with sweaty skill rather than with inspiration, and the whole book just misses its aim. It is Dickens without his genius. I remember, when some one told the late William DeMorgan that he was

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"like Dickens," he said he opened "David Copperfield" to find out exactly how much he was like him; "And oh, what a puny scribbler that made me feel!"

A better novel than "Angel Pavement" is by a hitherto unknown writer, Miss F. M. Mayor, whose book "The Rector's Daughter" is laid in the English countryside as Mr. Priestley's is in London streets. No American or no Australian could possibly have written it; its art is rooted in centuries of culture and genuine love of the land. How the English love the country in the winter! Many of them are homesick in the South of France. I do not think I shall be able to forget the four leading characters of this novel—the old Rector, his daughter, the Reverend Mr. Herbert and his beautiful wife. Every one of these persons is real, and we get to know them not by any description but by what they say and do. They develop and so do we. The book is filled with reflections on human nature and on nature, which do not interrupt the story or detract from its interest. It is as beautiful as melancholy music, as affecting as a winter sunset. And it lingers in the mind, like chords of music and like an afterglow.

The accomplished and versatile actress, Peggy Wood, has written a charming book called "Actors and People," the title of which reminds me of Samuel Richardson's famous division—"Men, Women, and Italians." Only Samuel didn't see the joke, and Peggy Wood's style is of humor all compact. Her descriptions of talks with Bernard Shaw, Emma Calvé and others are captivating; her remarks on youthful aspirants gave me a sharp surprise. I supposed that the Stars of the Theatre not only never gave personal interviews to stage-struck maidens, but never answered their letters. (Henry Irving wouldn't answer letters from Lord Tennyson.) But according to this book, Peggy Wood not only answers her "fan mail," but talks with and gives advice to all and sundry. More than that: she consults with other famous actors and actresses as to what advice they give to those whose ambition is equalled only by their obscurity; and finds that they also are puzzled as to what to write and what to say in the interviews. This seems so incredible that I cannot have read the pages accurately. I know a literary critic who had nothing like the renown of a famous actor; yet he never answered letters; and when a stamp was enclosed, he kept that as his reward for opening the mail.

Well, an interview with Peggy Wood would be memorable. I am sorry for all those who did not see her in Winthrop Ames's production of "The Merchant of Venice." Seldom in the annals of the stage was there a Portia who combined so much beauty with so much brains.

Edmund Pearson, who is qualified to fill the Chair of Murder in any university, has added to his works on this specialty a book called "Instigation of the Devil." This is a collection of real murders, told with compressed dramatic power. The title refers to the murderers and not to the author. Roughead in Great Britain and Pearson in America know more than most of us about actual murders and about the technic of capital crimes. And as the Devil is in many ways the most interesting character in the Universe, these specimens of his master-hand are fascinating.

A slender volume of charming poems, called "Out of Nymph—" (and you will find the meaning of the title if you buy the book), comes from Corinne Roosevelt Robinson, and is marked by the vitality characteristic of everything she

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writes. In this little book are imagination, love of country, love of the country, epistolary and conversational verses, and plenty of wit and humor. The motto of the collected poems might well be *Es lebe das Leben;* for there is an autumnal gusto refreshing to feel, such as Browning expressed in the lines

> Oh, good gigantic smile o' the brown old earth,
> This autumn morning!

It is pleasant to meet any one, either in person or within the covers of a book, who loves life and is not afraid to say so.

A lustrous volume that every public and university library and School of Music should own, and that every lover of music will covet, is "A History of Music in Pictures," edited by Georg Kinsky and other experts, with an introduction by Eric Blom, with the most interesting frontispiece-portrait in colors of Beethoven that I have ever seen—and, with *more than fifteen hundred illustrations in black and white*. This is an amazing book; being the pictorial history of music and musicians and musical instruments from about 3000 B. C. to A. D. 1929. After one has looked at it four or five thousand times, there will still be something in it fresh and new.

Alice Duer Miller, an expert diagnostician, has set forth in her new novel, "Green Isle," various members of the Long Island set, with a striking portrait of a near Superman. The romantic figure of this Captain of Industry is not, however, the most interesting feature of the book. He is a sham giant. What impresses me is the analysis of the character of the heroine, who does not find out she is in love until long after the reader knows it. I believe this is true to human nature. All teachers and all interested in education should read page 187. It is too long to quote here, but it is an excellent illustration of what F. P. A. used to call "Truetalk."

Archibald Henderson, Professor of Mathematics and Biographer of Shaw, has published a group of papers called "Contemporary Immortals"—the title begging the question, and yet if these do not survive, who will? Einstein, Shaw, Edison, Kipling, Madame Curie, Mussolini, and others. Mr. Henderson is perhaps the only literary critic in the world who can talk intelligently with Einstein. If only Willard Gibbs, who was not a literary critic, had lived to see the dawn of Einstein! What wonderful conversations they would have had!

In Mr. Henderson's preface, he quotes without comment a statement by Karl Marx, which might be taken as an illustration of missing the target. What is the antonym for hitting the nail on the head? Marx "once said of John Stuart Mill that he owed his eminence to the flatness of the surrounding country." The flatness was composed of such molehills as Darwin, Tyndall, Huxley, Spencer, Dickens, Thackeray, Gladstone, Tennyson, Browning, Carlyle, Ruskin, Newman, Grote, Morley, etc.

I was looking over the files of *The Huron County News* for 1865, a weekly paper that used to be published in Port Austin, Mich. I found an advertisement of the New York *Mercury* which shows how a periodical may keep the same name and yet degenerate. How sad Mr. Mencken will feel when he, or rather if he, sees this programme!

THE NEW YORK MERCURY

THE PRIDE OF THE FIRESIDE

In the prime of a vigorous and intellectual manhood, the Phenix of the weeklies begins its flight for the new year, over the wrecks of its flagging and lifeless contemporaries, with its eye fixed upon the sun, beneath which it owns no rivalry.

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The war, which has toppled down whatever is shallow and baseless has written no wrinkle on the bright aegis of our success. Our features for the issue of 1865 shake the pillars of whatever has heretofore been deemed imperial in serial literature. Both sides of the Atlantic tender us tribute. We shall continue the thrilling romances of Miss M. E. Braddon, necromancer of the strong dark passions, to whom we pay more money annually than the entire capital of our imitators, and add to our American staff the champion jester of the cap and bells, Josh Billings, who will commence with the first of January a series of his well-known inimitable comic papers written expressly for us in his irresistibly convulsive vein. Harriet E. Prescott, the most polished and imaginative sketch-writer living; P. T. Barnum, the world-famed showman and autobiographer. . . .

Those who imagine that Mark Twain's fame began with the publication of "The Celebrated Jumping Frog" in May, 1867, should look over the files of the *Huron County News* for 1866. Mark was famous all over the country for his lecture on the Sandwich Islands, and as a humorous journalist of the Pacific Coast. This Michigan paper prints many things by him, which I suppose were lifted without pay. But even this goes to prove that his name was beginning to be a "household word" even before the "Frog" of 1867, and the international glory gained by "Innocents Abroad" in 1869. Yet it might have been better for Mark's fame if he had published nothing before the "Frog," for these articles help to explain the delay of critical recognition.

In a time when there is so much hysteria about "Reds," I am proud to see that two distinguished Judges, both graduates of Yale, have recently independently defended the liberty of the individual. It seems that an alien named Voich was up for deportation on the ground that he was a Communist. In a letter to *The Nation,* Voich's attorney, Carol Weiss King, says, "Judge Thacher held that there was no evidence in the record that Voich was a member of the Communist party. He did say, however: 'The relator consorted with radical agitators, and no doubt sympathized with their views; but this is not enough to warrant his deportation, unless prejudice is to take the place of proof.'" (Judge Thacher has since been appointed Solicitor General of the United States.)

Now with the average man prejudice does take the place of proof; we must depend therefore on learned and upright judges to stand firm against popular clamor, which is always based on two things—ignorance and fear.

The other case drew an editorial in the New York *World* for July 19, praising another Federal Judge, William N. Runyon of New Jersey.

THE COURT ADDRESSES A RED

In view of the epidemic of Red baiting that we have had recently, and seem still to be having, it is refreshing to read the remarks of Judge William N. Runyon of Newark to Harry Gold, a Communist, who was before him in Federal court. Gold, it will be recalled, was driving to a Communist picnic when he was hailed by a soldier from Camp Dix who wanted a lift. He gave the lift, lent his guest a quarter and presently fell to talking enthusiastically about Communism. His reward for this was to be turned over to a State policeman, the soldier asking him to stop a minute and then calling the officer. He was held four days without bail. His lawyer tried in vain to obtain his release by habeas corpus from State judges and then sought the Federal court. Judge Runyon not only released him but had some pointed things to say about the treatment he had been accorded. "Irrespective of what the conversation was," he said, "it seems to me, and I think it seems to the District Attorney, that your situation is not one that demands the treatment that has been accorded you. I want to say to you frankly that it seems to me you did two kind acts. You gave a man a lift who wanted it and gave him a little money because he wanted it. That may be Communism, but if it is I think it is a very admirable brand of Communism to share your belongings with

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somebody else. I can only say, sir, that I hope you can look with kindness on government in general." And again: "I don't take it that this government is designed to throttle a man's ideas or to close his mouth. I believe that free speech is just as much to-day an incident and a principle of this government as it ever was. I believe you have the right to express your ideas as and when you please as long as those ideas so expressed are not designed to undo and destroy our government."

I was so pleased by the remarks of Judge Runyon quoted in *The World* that I wrote him expressing my appreciation, and received the following letter:

regarding the fierce little Communist who baits his prey with two bit pieces and motor rides. He may think he hates the whole wide world as at present constituted, but I was convinced that despite any incidental expression of his views to which he gave utterance as he and his soldier friend, like Philip and the Eunuch, rode through the countryside, there was really tucked away beneath his ribs a thoroughly orthodox and kindly pump. Regarding his failure to proselyte, it may be that he lacked Philip's flair for salesmanship, or perhaps eunuchs are easier to convince than are big bassos in khaki.

One had only to look at the glass eye which he sported, to be assured of his benign outlook on life. Believe me, it was one of the dreamiest, softest, bo-opiest eyes I've ever met.

Had he really been like the station agent of the story, a man of steady habits, that is, mad at everything all the time, and with an infinite variety from which to choose, he would never have appropriated for himself a vicarious optic, so calm and serene, so winsome and gentle.

Rather, I believe, would he have picked out a head light reminiscent of Alaric or Hannibal, of Alexander or Napoleon, one of the real Battling Nelsons of history.

So much for him. He wasn't a bit dangerous and couldn't be if he tried.

It may be that United States Judges will turn out finally to be the only guardians of our liberties.

In my remarks on religion in the June issue of this magazine, I wrote, "Jesus said, 'Let him that is without sin cast the first stone.' " The Sioux City, Ia., *Journal* (as well as a number of correspondents) corrects me. The Authorized Version says, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." Well, I was not trying to quote literally the Authorized Version; I was quoting a remark by Jesus. Which would be more unpleasant—to be hit by the stone the first man cast, or to be hit by the first stone cast? And according to Professor James Moffatt, whose translation is one of the best of the modern versions, the passage reads "Let the innocent among you throw the first stone at her." I am not trying to crawl out of a mistake and I regard the Authorized Version as the best English of all translations. But in this particular instance I was more interested in the spirit than in the letter.

With reference to the word *thon* mentioned in this column some time ago, an interesting letter comes from Alexander G. Hamilton, of Chatswood, N. S. W., Australia, who is nearly eighty years old.

In my young days, I lived in the North of Ireland, and there thon was in common use, generally as an adjective in place of that or yon, but often as a pronoun,—"I don't like thon!" And I have a dim recollection that I heard it used thus in Glasgow during a year's stay in that city. Perhaps Dr. George W. Lyon is of Scotch descent.

And it seems to me that the awkwardness of the sentence you quote about John and Mary, would be easily remedied in this way:—"Father wants to see John or Mary, if either of them comes to-night."

(Incidentally, Mr. Hamilton enters the F. Q. Club, having read it when he was about eighteen.)

The same post brought another letter, confirming Mr. Hamilton's memory of Glasgow. Mr. Thomas Locken writes from a New Jersey hospital, that *thon*

is commonly used in and around Glasgow, Scotland. In fact the whole western part use it.

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But it is looked upon as a "slang" word and used to designate,—"thon house." I should think it is a contraction of "that one."

With reference to subconscious poetry, Florence Emily Cain of Deland, Fla., writes:

I submit the following couplet with which my subconscious mind awakened me one morning after I had gone to sleep suffering in sympathy with a friend in sorrow:

Forth from the merciful sheath of night
Came the piercing sword of day.

I consider this a beautiful metaphor for which my conscious mind was in no way responsible.

Professor Arthur H. Nethercot of Northwestern University had a long poem ringing in his head, of which the first four lines are:

SOILED

Down among the shocks and stubble
Nellie got herself in trouble—
Turned her foot and broke her garter,
Wandering where she hadn't arter.

I regret there is no space to give the entire poem. It is an essay in criticism, dealing with contemporary novels of the soil.

Miss Grace W. Wood, of the Free Public Library of Worcester, Mass., not only qualifies herself as a member of the F. Q. Club, but states that the Reverend Robert Aris Willmott (1809-1863), an English scholar, was an enthusiastic lover of the F. Q., and that his book, "The Pleasures of Literature," is quite often read at the Worcester Library.

Two important additions to the Fano Club are Professor and Mrs. Leon J. Richardson, of the University of California. *Fanum Fortunae!* Professor Richardson, in his card from Fano, reminds me of a great game of golf I had the pleasure of playing with him and Professor Charles M. Gayley and Professor C. C. Plehn, at Berkeley, Calif., in the year of our Lord 1908.

A valuable letter from Taylor Reed of Reedsville, Pa. In the July SCRIBNER'S I had discussed the possibilities for Poet Laureate after the death of Tennyson and had written, "William Morris was a Socialist and Swinburne a red republican, hence both were politically ineligible." Mr. Reed informs me:

Regarding William Morris your statement that he was considered ineligible for the laureateship is incorrect, I think, with unjustified reflection on British officialdom of the time. Inquiry was made of close friends of William Morris whether he would accept the laureateship if appointed; answer was returned that he could not. The source of the inquiry, close to the appointing power, and its tone, were such that the poet and his friends were fully of the opinion that he was in effect offered the laureate and declined it. Their sentiment in the premises was most kindly.

I should perhaps state, in explanation of my information in the matter, that in August, 1896, going to Norway to observe an eclipse of the sun, at a point in the path of totality, Vadso, two hundred miles east of the North Cape on an inlet of the Arctic Ocean, it transpired that William Morris, in state of health giving concern, a young physician accompanying him, and myself, were at a "private hotel" together, for a week the only persons at table, under the amazing gastronomic arrangements of Arctic Norway. My information regarding the laureateship was mostly from a friend on shipboard, but I remember the poet stating that he could not accept, though at this distance of time I do not recollect the reasons given.

The poet I found very agreeable, with a great gruffness of manner; and I have always recalled with delight that, although I had not professed any special adherence to his political views or his craftsmanship nor for that matter any definite comprehension of what it was all about, on the last day on shipboard he cordially invited me to come to his home, mentioning that as a college man I would probably enjoy his book collection.

The outcome in point of health was as feared; there was no lasting benefit from the trip, his health continued to decline, and he died a few weeks later.

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So far as I know, this is the first mention in print of the offer of the laureateship to Morris.

The effect of "temperance" on literature would be a good subject for a Ph. D. thesis. One of the most learned and enthusiastic Cooperians in America, George L. Bradlee, of Providence, R. I., says that in chapter VI of "The Last of the Mohicans," the passage describing how Hawkeye made and drank his own homebrew, is now usually omitted in school and other editions.

"taking breath after a draught, whose length announced how much he admired his own skill in brewing."

As many suppose the expression "the almighty dollar" to be of comparatively recent origin, I am grateful to Maud Villiers-Stuart, who writes from Monte Carlo:

I was very much surprised to discover in an old copy of Washington Irving's "The Crayon Papers," a chapter called "The Creole Village. A Sketch from a Steamboat" first published in 1837, in which was this reference. "As we swept away from the shore I cast back a wistful eye upon the moss grown roofs and ancient elms of the village and prayed that the inhabitants might long retain their happy ignorance—their absence of all enterprise and improvements—their respect for the fiddle and their contempt for the Almighty Dollar." In a footnote is printed, "This phrase used for the first time in this sketch, has since passed into current circulation, and by some has been questioned as savoring of irreverence; the author therefore owes it to his orthodoxy to declare that no irreverence was intended even to the dollar itself; which he is aware is daily becoming more and more an object of worship."

I find that Bartlett ascribes the first use of the phrase to this particular piece by Irving; but I imagine Irving is not usually credited with it.

Here are questions of good usage. Mrs. U. H. Wagner, of San Antonio, Texas, writes of an expression found in the June SCRIBNER's.

In Miss Onativia's article, on page 596, is—"As far as I know, no one has called it to their attention." Doesn't one call another's attention to a fact rather than the fact to the attention?

Mr. G. J. Rector, of Nevada City, Calif., writes that the word *protagonist* is being increasingly used in a wrong sense. He points out two instances, one in August *Forum* and one in August SCRIBNER's. The word "does not mean advocate, proponent, nor is it an antonym of 'antagonist.' . . . indeed the word is a stumbling block and apparently exerts a strange fascination for experienced writers as well as novices."

A prodigiously common use of another excellent word that ought to have a specific meaning is the use of *alibi* for any excuse.

Certain words that are all well enough I find worked to death by the intelligentsia. For example: *bleak, wistful,* and *avid*. With reference to the last, here comes an interesting letter from John H. Protheroe, of Rustburg, Va. ("one Jeremiah Rust gave land to build and endow a court house in 1780. Jokes are already 150 years old").

"I'm not hungry, but, thank God, I'm greedy" is good, wholesome English. But who would want to thank God for being avid? The village blacksmith did not perspire; everybody knows, the smallest child knows that he sweated. The whale, no doubt, had a stomach, but this was only a specialized compartment in the larger accommodation of his old-fashioned belly, wherein Jonah was adequately housed. Small boys who smoked used to spew copiously; now they become indisposed. There used to be lots of flabby folks around; now the writing people report the prevalence of flaccid persons. But when the plangent outcries of squalling children are heard in the land, you, as I said, have got to do something about it. What is wanted is a society for putting dog Latin where it belongs—in the pretentious incinerator or the pompous crematorium.

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Your remarks on the improved social status of Catholics are interesting. When in London, though not a Catholic, I often attended Vespers at Brompton Oratory on Sunday afternoons. The congregation was obviously made up largely of Irish and continentals, but there was another element, the mediæval aristocratic families of England. The short, sturdy figure, with unkempt beard, clad in rusty black clothes of no particular cut, who was ushered by the verger with fussy respect, represented in the public imagination charging knights, showers of arrows rattling against hardware, bloody treason and insurrection, quaking kings, execution blocks, masked headsmen, battlements, dungeons, rose-windowed chapels, chanting, tonsured priests, and gorgeous mitred abbots. The Duke of Norfolk is Earl Marshal of England and bosses the coronation of Protestant kings in a Protestant abbey.

The Rev. Dr. Thomas C. Hall, author of "The Religious Background of American Culture," writes:

Americans have forgotten the strong social position the Roman Catholic Church maintained up to the year 1848. At that time, the Irish Immigration and its assumed hegemony weakened this social position. What we now see is the social recovery as the Roman Catholic Aristocracy of the South regains its economic strength.

To go from the sublime to the ridiculous, Miss Aimée Crandell Fort, of Melrose, Mass., proves to me not only that music is used in sanatoriums for the cure of nervous and melancholy men and women, but that it is also used to soothe cows, who I thought never needed soothing; and it not only soothes them, it increases their supply of milk. She sends me an article from the August *Stone Webster Magazine,* containing a picture of many cows indoors listening to the radio; under the heading

BED TIME STORIES FOR BOSSY

There is absolutely no use to deny the fact that soft, melodious music has a very soothing effect upon the nerves of a cow.

The camera has made the cows in the immediate foreground of this picture a little nervous, but notice the sleepy, contented appearance of those in the background.

This relaxed condition of the cows undoubtedly has a very stimulating effect upon her milk glands, resulting not only in an increased flow of milk, but also a better quality of milk.

New books mentioned in this article are named below, with their publishers:

"In the Days of Bicycles and Bustles," by Ralph D. Blumenfeld. Brewer and Warren. $2.
"Shrimps for Tea," by Josephine Blumenfeld. Doubleday, Doran. $2.
New edition of "Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam," ill. by Willy Pogany. Crowell.
New edition of "A Sentimental Journey," by Sterne. Edinburgh Univ. Press.
"The John Riddell Murder Case," by John Riddell. Scribners. $2.
"Angel Pavement," by J. B. Priestley. Harpers. $3.
"The Rector's Daughter," by F. M. Mayor. Coward McCann. $1.50.
"Actors and People," by Peggy Wood. Appleton. $2.50.
"Instigation of the Devil," by Edmund Pearson. Scribners. $2.
"Green Isle," by Alice Duer Miller. Dodd, Mead & Co. $2.
"Contemporary Immortals," by Archibald Henderson. Appleton. $2.50.
"A History of Music in Pictures," by Georg Kinsky. Dutton.
"Out of Nymph—," by Corinne Roosevelt Robinson. Scribners. $2.

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Lesby

(Continued from page 586)

Lesby laughed. "I remember, all right. Don't youse make any mistake about that. I recognized a man the minute I clapped eyes on youse that first day."

"You're a great scout, Lesby. I don't know what I'd done if I hadn't found you."

"Go 'long. You'd found another woman."

"Not another Lesby. There's only one."

"Good thing, mebby."

"Yes, I'm glad there's none other. I want my woman different. . . . Anne says I'm marryin' you because you're big and strong and can help when I'm short of men. What do you think?"

"I think she's a little fool."

"Accordin' to her, I'm no better'n that damn Santee—that I want you like he does and I ought to be ashamed of myself."

"What'd youse tell her?"

"I told her I was choosin' you because I loved you."

"That ought've shut her up."

"It didn't faze her. She had a bright comeback. She said I didn't love you. She said she heard me ask you for a kiss. She said if I loved you, I'd taken it without askin'. . . . So I won't ask this time." Stephen drew her against him and pressed his lips down hard on her full, warm ones. "That settles it, don't it?" he said, freeing her.

Lesby's bosom was heaving. "I didn't have to have that to be sure of youse, Stephen. A woman always knows her man. I couldn't ever lay 'longside any other after knowin' you."

"And I can't imagine myself holdin' any other woman than you, Lesby. . . . When will you marry me?"

"Any time, Stephen."

"Let it be soon."

"Best wait till after harvest. . . . There's Pa." Lesby got up as the rattle of the wash-basin sounded from the lean-to. "If I'm goin' to make biscuits for supper I'd best get at it."

V

After the harvest. . . . Anne heard it for the first time that night at the supper-table. John was full of it. He could scarcely eat what Lesby put on his plate for talking about it. Not until Lesby said, "Shut up on that, Pa," did he give his attention to his meal. Even then one could read on his face the pleasure he felt at the thought of the wedding—after the harvest.

Anne kept her eyes on her plate. A quick glance at Stephen had shown him smiling at Lesby with his mouth full of bread and fried ham. His eyes, deep-set and as darkly blue as the heavens on a starlit night, burned with a warm glow as they looked on Lesby. Lesby's face too was rich with color and a smile played about her generous mouth as she ate her bread and ham and drank her strong tea.

Supper over, Anne stole outside. Climbing fences and crossing two pastures, she reached the creek and flung herself in the grass. . . .

After a time she got up and wandered about in the dark until the moon's silver rim appeared over the Rock lying in the east like a sleeping lion with his head between his paws.

As she looked at the dark Rock she thought of the bronze turkey, but it did not ease her. Courage—honor—purity—these seemed far, far away to-night. Jealousy—envy—these had taken possession of her.

After the harvest. . . . He did not love Lesby. He wanted her because she was big and strong and could lend a hand when he was short of men. He wanted her because she could give him big, husky sons who would help him when she was too old and worn out to work.

After the harvest it would be a sin to think of him. He would be her brother. After the harvest it would be a sin to want him to hold her in his arms. After the harvest he would hold Lesby in his arms. . . . She would have to go away before the harvest was over. She could not stay and see him after he belonged to Lesby. Even if he were Lesby's, she would want him. She could never kill that in her. If he looked at her tenderly, she would be lost. If he opened his arms, she would go to him even if he were a thousand times Lesby's. . . .

He was so closely entwined in her thoughts that she was not surprised when his voice called to her out of the darkness. At her reply he came up the creek bank from among the trees a little way off.

"Lesby wants you to come in. It's after ten."

"I'll come."

"What's the matter?" he asked as he reached her. "What's up?"

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She said again, "I'll come," and he stood looking down at her, his brows puckered.

"You silly little girl. You're still peeved that Lesby's goin' to marry me."

"She'll wish she hadn't married you when she finds out why you done it," she said evenly.

"I ain't marryin' her because she can work hard. Get that out of your head."

"She'll be sorry like Ma was—an' die all humped over."

Even in the uncertain light Anne could see that he had flushed darkly, and it gave her a feeling of pleasure that she could thus stir him.

"I don't work women that way," he rejoined. "Lesby'll get all the help she wants. I'll be glad for her to have it. I'm not the sort of farmer to work his wife to death. If I can't afford help, I'll quit the business. . . . You've got it into your silly head that all I see in Lesby is that she's big and husky and can work like a man—that I want to make a plow-horse out of her. Lesby is a fine woman. I couldn't find a better if I looked the whole province over. That's what I think of her."

Anne continued to look at him with level eyes. "You wouldn't say no less'n that if you had picked out a Jersey cow or a mare," she rejoined. "That ain't love."

"Hell—you've read too much of that novel trash, Anne. My idea of love and yours ain't the same by a long shot. Lesby and I understand each other." He turned away only to face her again. "Just because Lesby and I don't spend our time kissin' in corners and huggin' back of hay-stacks is no sign we don't love each other. So cut that out. I don't want to hear any more about it. I'm goin' to marry Lesby after the harvest—and my reason is my own."

Anne's face shone white in the warm moonlight. "I said you wasn't no different from Milt Santee an' you ain't."

At that Stephen turned sharply away and strode down the slope among the trees.

During the harvest Lesby had her hands full. Old Mrs. Tolliver had come to help. She could wash dishes and peel vegetables and churn and sweep and this and that; but to Lesby fell most of the hard work. There was no time to think of the wedding not so far off, no time to plan for it. She would have to have a dress and a hat. She could not be married in the old wine-colored silk. She had had it four years now and it had begun to show the wear. Still—one could be married any time and in anything; but there was only one time for harvest.

With all the men in the field—except John—there was work to do and to spare at house and barn. The cows had to be brought up and fed and milked and let out again. The calves had to be cared for and swill taken to the hogs. Pies had to be made, and there was bread to bake and hams to boil—countless things to do. And when Mrs. Tolliver had sent the barrel churn whirling until the butter in flecks had shown on the glass, Lesby pressed out the butter and put it in crocks and carried it into the cellar, for she let no one touch the butter but herself.

Huge stacks of dishes and pots and pans had to be washed and the kitchen rid up after the men had tramped over it with their dirty boots. For three times a day eleven hungry men with appetites of plow-horses filed into the hot kitchen and Lesby filled them. Eleven husky men—John ate little—filed into the kitchen three times a day, bringing in with them the smell of horses and alfalfa and warm sweat. They sat about the table, talking and laughing and eating noisily while old Mrs. Tolliver listened and chuckled as she sat by the window mopping her wrinkled, dripping face on her apron.

Lesby passed from chair to chair, refilling plates and cups, joshing with the witty Mattison and ready with a direct answer to the keen-minded Albers. Once she smacked Chuck on the side of his wet, sleek head for making a dirty remark about their neighbor Russ Milliken and the yellow-haired Minna, his wife Sarah's sister, who had come to visit them. The men about the table had laughed—all but Stephen. His jaws had come down hard on the ear of hot corn between his teeth. Milliken was a damn fool. He had a good woman.

Stephen lingered after the others had left the kitchen. Mrs. Tolliver had gone into the cellar for more butter for her own dinner. "Is it true about Milliken and that sister-in-law of his?" he asked.

"I guess nawthin's happened yet." Lesby had cleared a place at one end of the table and sat buttering an ear of corn which she had taken from the pot. "No tellin' when it will," she added. "Russ had enough sense before Minna come, an' now she's windin' him round her little finger."

"I thought Sarah was goin' to have a little one."

"Not till round Christmas." Lesby bit deep into the buttered ear and went on with her mouth full. "Sarah ought to have more spunk than to allow them to carry on thataway."

"She ought to turn that silly sister of hers

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over her lap and give her a good spanking; she's big enough," rejoined Stephen. "And shoot Russ's pants full of buck-shot. Then maybe they'd behave themselves."

"Yas—a man's a fool if he thinks he can have two women at the same time and get away with it. Nine times outa ten he finds he's cut off more'n he can chew."

Stephen could see through the open window across the pasture to the line of willows that marked the creek. A figure had come out from among the trees and stood looking up at the sky. She seemed to be watching something high up among the clouds—perhaps only the clouds themselves. His brows had come together. "Sure you ain't doin' too much with all these men here, Lesby?"

"Shucks, no. I'm used to work, Stephen. I'd go loony if I didn't have plenty work to occupy me."

"This old woman you got here—she can't be much help. I told you to get a young, strong one."

"She needed the work—an' she does more'n you think."

The figure in the distant field had taken down her hair and it was floating out behind her like a dark veil as she stood facing the wind. . . . Lesby's deep voice in the room came to Stephen:

". . . don't see you sparin' yourself. You're doin' the work o' six men these days. I been watchin' an' I don't see you restin' any as long as there's enough light to work by. An' youse don't read at night any more like you used. I notice you get off to bed right after supper."

Stephen still watched the distant figure. "I have to get up early. I'll get back to my readin' after the harvest."

"Yas—an' mind youse don't get straddle that horse. Doc Maybrey said not till spring, you know."

"Mayberry's a bit of a granny. Six months is a long time to wait. I'm sound as a roach. . . . But you're the one to go easy. You've got in the habit of takin' all that's piled onto you. You ought to make Anne help."

"Shucks! She moves too slow in the house. Seem like as soon as she comes in the house her feet drag. She's spritely enough outside. An' she's squeamish about dish-water an' stove-smut. I can't bother with her. I can do it in half the time. I'd ruther she'd grab what she wants to eat and clear out. . . . Besides, she's got a tricky heart. Always had. Even as a little un she'd get to runnin' an' turn blue as a goose. An' the heat gets her. She keeled over right slap bang in the middle of the floor here yesterday. She says the smell of the sweaty men makes her sick. She ain't no more use on a farm than a chiny rabbit. I don't know what's goin' to become of her. There ain't a man round here that'd risk takin' her as a wife."

It was as if the figure in the far field had heard the words, for it suddenly ran in among the trees out of sight. Stephen's eyes came back to the room again.

"Well, you take it as easy as you can this hot weather, Lesby. A woman oughtn't work too hard. It's worse on 'em than on a man."

"You mean I ought to take care myself for child-bearin'?"

"I—hadn't thought of that. But I guess you're right."

"Don't you worry. We'll have plenty children, Stephen." Lesby got up and lifted another ear of corn out of the pot with her fingers and sat down again. "An' you won't have a spindlin' one 'mongst un. I'll go careful like when I'm carryin' un—seein'st they'll be yours," she added with a flash of a smile up at him.

Stephen's hand came down on her shoulder, his fingers closing hard over it as their eyes met. Old Mrs. Tolliver's slow, lumbering feet in men's shoes were mounting the cellar steps and John's tilting chair scraped against the porch wall outside as he got up.

"I'll be glad when harvest's over, Lesby."

"Me too, Stephen."

VI

The last load had been brought into the barn and the men had filed out of the kitchen for the last time until another harvest. Mrs. Tolliver had packed her flowered cotton bag and stuffed her wages tied in a man's handkerchief into the bottom of her skirt pocket and had climbed up into the wagon seat beside Mattison, who had agreed to take her on to her next job. The sound of the thrasher died away down the road in the direction of the Hempstead farm, and Lesby with another button of her blouse undone stood in the doorway of the lean-to getting a breath of fresh air.

When Anne stole back from the creek and peered into the kitchen, she found it empty. It was clean, freshly scrubbed. The stove had been polished. The shining pots and pans hung in rows over it. The windows were wide, letting in the cool outside air. The table was as bare as the palm of her hand. Harvest was over. Home was home again.

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Voices came to her from the front porch and she passed through the sitting-room to the screen door and peered out. Her father was smoking with his elbows on his knees. Lesby sat in the rocking-chair. The wine-colored dress lay across her lap.

"Seem like that dress is about done for, Lesby," John was saying.

"Yas—I'm huntin' for a piece under the hem here where it ain't faded. Thought I'd send a sample down to Toronto. Six yards ought to make it."

"Youse ought to be married in white, Lesby. Somehow I'd like to see youse married in a white dress with a long white veil trailin' out ahind."

"Shucks, Pa. They'd think Niagry Falls was comin' up the aisle."

Anne drew back. Harvest was over. The wedding preparations had begun. She found herself outside, going rapidly down the path in the direction of the barn. She was dimly aware that some one stood at the horse-trough. Then a voice—Stephen's:

"What's the matter?"

It cleared her vision and she saw him standing at the side of his horse with his arm over the animal's neck while it drank.

"Lesby's sendin' for the wine silk." The words came from her without her volition.

"Well—harvest is over. . . ."

In October Milt Santee brought over a turkey. He had shot it up at the Rock. Shot its head clean off—slick as a whistle. Santee was a good shot. He was proud of his prize. It was a beautiful bird. He was glad to offer it to Lesby. He had no hard feelings against her now that her marriage to Stephen MacLaren was so close. He held no grudge against either of them. He had lost. Stephen MacLaren had won. That was all there was to it. As he had said to Walt Larrabee and to Luce Calloway when he had heard about it, "There's as good fish in the sea——"

The turkey would weigh more than twenty pounds when dressed, he told John as he took the headless bird out of his car at the barn door and held it up by its legs for John's inspection. Thirty pounds, or he'd eat his hat. And see the colors in them feathers, will you? Every color of the rainbow. Too bad it had to be dressed at all. Too bad it couldn't be put on the table just like that. Them feathers might be used for stuffin' a piller—a wedden piller—and Milt Santee snickered. Yes, sir—one the biggest, finest birds—*the* biggest, finest bird he'd ever seen—thirty-five pounds if it weighed an ounce.

John was none too pleased at being left with the gift. It was too big, for one thing—too big and heavy. And bright. That was what troubled John. It was too bright. He carried it to Lesby in the calf-lot with misgivings.

"Santee brung this for a wedden gift to you. He shot it up on the Rock."

Lesby put down the empty pail and took the turkey into her hands. She turned it over and over. She held it this way and that. The sun shone on its feathers—deep crimson and blue—deep blue and scarlet—blood-red scarlet and green and orange and purple and gold. At last her eyes met John's troubled ones over the lifeless thing. John nodded. There couldn't be two like it in the country.

"We'll get the feathers off before she sees it," said Lesby. "What she don't know won't hurt her. . . . Take up that pail before the calves tromple it flat."

Lesby reached for a bit of wire hanging against the smoke-house and wound it deftly about the turkey's legs and swung the body up to the hook over the pig-dip where the huge hog had hung against the sky on the day Stephen arrived. Now, instead of the pinkly nude bulk of the great hog, there swung this way and that in the light of the morning sun, a winged creature—an up-ended Winged Victory without a head, its great wings spread wide—wide as the span of Lesby's arms. There in the sun it hung, gleaming with purple and gold—gold and crimson and deep purple, the brilliant blue of the skies and the rich green of the pastures.

This way and that it turned, sparkling with life, a glorious emblem of chivalry and courage, while Lesby went for the barrel in which to stuff the feathers out of sight to bury later. It sparkled and gleamed as it hung there. It was as if, so soon to be robbed of its pride and made a feast for savages, there had flowed into its feathers the crimson stream of all its forefathers and the gold of many sunsets, the stinging blue of winter skies and the rich, spring green of the wild Rock—the Rock over which it had wandered deigning to show itself only to the favored few.

Lesby went into the smoke-house and emptied a barrel of odds and ends. When she came out with the barrel and set it down under the headless bird, John said:

"Better hurry. I thought I heard the screen."

"Go head her off. Send her back to set the table. . . . Stir your stumps, Pa."

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John moved to obey. . . . Too late. . . . Anne was staring at them over the fence. Her eyes were two black holes burned in a blanket.

Stephen pitching hay in the field by the house looked up to see Anne running toward him, her face white as milk, her eyes wide with fright. He flung the pitchfork into the hay by him and opened his arms and she ran into them. For a moment she clung to him and he held her close. Then she tore herself from his embrace and sunk to the hay and covered her face with her hands. The blood was pounding through Stephen. He knelt by her.

"Anne—Anne——"

"No, no—go 'way—go 'way!"

Stephen got to his feet, his heart beating in jerks. An exultation seized him and he strode across the field not knowing where he went. John's voice brought him down to earth and he found himself half-way between house and barn with John limping at his side.

". . . And she got skeered an' run," John was saying.

He jerked his head in the direction of the smoke-house and Stephen saw the body of a partly picked fowl hanging by its legs from the hook of the pig-dip. Lesby was standing by it stripping off its feathers and dropping them into a barrel.

"The bronze turkey," said John.

"What does that mean?" asked Stephen.

"It lived up on the Rock and Anne sorta laid claim to it," John explained. "She's had it in her head it was diff'rent. She said it stood for courage and honor——"

"Shucks! You know Anne," said Lesby as they reached her. "Nothin's ever as it really is. A weed's a tree an' a sparrer-hawk's a horse ridin' the clouds or som'p'n like that."

And Lesby, having denuded the pale body of its last feather, plunged her hands into the horse-trough and stood sloshing them about in the water. "She an' that Len Hempstead an' the Hethaby kids have had it in their silly heads for years that a bronze turkey has been wanderin' round over that Rock over there, not showin' itself to anybody but who it had a mind to."

"But you got to admit, Lesby," put in John, "that everybody round here has went up to the Rock to pick berries every summer for years now and not a soul has ever caught sight of so much as a tail feather of it except Len Hempstead and Anne. That looks like som'p'n, you got to admit."

"Shucks, Pa. There's lots of wild turkeys round. No tellin' this is the one."

"There ain't another bronze wild one, Lesby. . . . The thing is, Stephen, this bronze turkey had got so it stood for a sort of—what you call it—to the younguns round here. They've got it into their heads that nobody with anything wrong the matter with un could ever see it—it simply wasn't goin' to come out an' show itself to un."

Stephen stood frowning at the dangling bird. "How did it come here?"

Lesby explained, and Stephen gave an explosive, "Damn Santee!"

"Don't be a fool, Stephen. He didn't have any idea that turkey was any diff'rent from any other. You don't s'pose he ever heard any of that childish talk, do youse? Anne ought to stop bein' a child. She's most eighteen."

Stephen made his way on to the barn. When he entered the kitchen at noon, Anne's chair stood empty. Lesby was peering into the oven, and Stephen saw a great fowl lying on its back in a pan with a wide strip of fat pork reposing across its breast. Chuck, already seated at the table, filled his lungs as a whiff of pleasing odor swept to him. Jerg's nostrils had dilated too; he was grinning broadly.

"Do you suppose that's Anne's turkey?" asked Chuck.

"No tellin'," said Lesby. "One gobbler looks same as anothern."

"Guess Anne'll hide out as long as there's any of it on the table," remarked Jerg, losing his grin.

Lesby closed the oven door upon it and took her place at the table. "Then she'll get mighty hungry," she rejoined bluntly. "That turkey weighed near onto thirty-three pound, dressed."

Stephen caught himself frowning and sat up straighter. His action made Lesby glance quickly across at him.

"Why you jerkin'? Don't feel that cut any, do you?"

"No—I'm sound as a roach."

"Sometimes a cut like that twitches for months, Doc Maybrey says. Best go easy for a while."

"Yas." John smiled at him over his tea-filled saucer. "You can take it easy now harvest is over. You don't want to look like a ghost at your own wedden."

"Am I lookin' like a ghost?" Stephen felt that his tone had been a bit sharp, and he added: "I'm all right," a bit lamely.

"I think the harvestin' did take a bit out of youse, Stephen. You best take it easier now till after the wedden."

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"Have you decided on the date?" asked Chuck.

"That's up to Lesby."

"I thought round about the middle or last of November. How'd that suit?"

Lesby was smiling at him, and Stephen met the smile with an intake of breath. "Any time you say," he replied evenly.

But he got up without eating all of his pie and returned to the barn, where he led the bay out to a post in the sunshine and began to curry him. He did a good job, expending on it some of his excess steam. After which he saddled the horse and swung himself across him and set off for the Larrabee farm to see the yearling steer Walt had for sale.

He had stabled the horse and fed him and had told John the good and bad points of the yearling steer which he had seen at Walt's and which he had finally decided to buy although Walt was asking too much for it, before he remembered the bandbox which Mrs. Larrabee had intrusted to his care for Lesby. He found the box undamaged where he had put it down beside the horse-trough upon dismounting, and carried it into the house.

Lesby turned from the stove where she had been basting the turkey as he entered the kitchen. Her handsome face was flushed as much with annoyance as with heat.

"Well, Stephen," she scolded, "youse was all-firin' anxious to get straddle that horse again, wasn't you? I'd thought you'd had more sense. Doc Maybrey said not till spring."

Stephen put the bandbox on the table and wiped the sweat from his face. "I took it easy," he said; but he looked tired. "Mrs. Larrabee sent your hat—the weddin' bonnet she said you asked her to make. I hope I didn't mash it."

"Best set a while." Lesby eyed him as she unfastened the string of the box. "Four mile the first day on a horse isn't good sense, Stephen." Though the words were a reproof, the tone was unusually gentle.

"I had to get out, Lesby. . . . I hadn't been on a horse in so long," he added.

"Um—" Lesby had taken the hat from the box and stood whirling it on the upright fingers of a large brown hand. A queer twist of amusement had come to the corners of her handsome mouth. "How'd youse reckon I'll look in that, Stephen—goin' up the church aisle? . . . Like the Queen o' Sheby?"

"You—you'll look handsome in anything, Lesby." He got up, wiping the sweat from his forehead. "Lord, Lesby! You got it hot in here." He went to the doorway and stood looking out with his face lifted to the breeze. "Mrs. Larrabee said there was a bit of ribbon left," he said presently, "but she'd use it in her patch-quilt if you didn't mind."

Lesby laughed as she replaced the hat in its box. "Ain't that just like Mrs. Lar'bee? Youse ain't goin' to get som'p'n outen her for nawthin'. . . . Best set a while, Stephen." He had turned to the room again to get a drink from the pail on the sink. "You're pasty as pie-dough."

Stephen flung the contents of the dipper through the screen before he had more than put it to his lips. He said something about getting fresh water and set out with the pail in the direction of the well.

Anne was trying to pump and hold the tin cup under the spout at the same time—a difficult feat for any one with so slight a span. Not until a hand came down on the pump-handle did she know that Stephen had come to the well. She stood aside and he continued pumping without losing a stroke and hung his pail over the spout hook. When the water reached the top of the pail he took the cup from her and dipped it deep and handed it back dripping with a scarcely audible "Guess that's cool," and stood with his eyes on the distant field as she drank.

She had hung the empty cup on its nail and turned away before he spoke again.

"Wait a minute. I've got something to tell you. . . . I mean—I've got to tell you something."

He waited so long that she said, "You—wanted to tell me som'p'n?" before he brought his eyes away from the fields. Even then he dared not trust himself to look at her. Instead he stared down at the pail swinging between them.

"When a man finds out he's made a mistake, Anne—the only thing left for him to do is to make the best of it. . . . I've made a mistake. I've been a fool. A blind fool. . . . But you and I both know that when a man gives his promise to a woman, he never asks for it back."

Stephen took the brimming pail from the spout and returned to the house. When he came out again, no one stood at the well.

VII

It seemed to Stephen that things banded together that autumn to undermine his determination to be fair and square with Lesby. To begin with, Lesby herself postponed the wedding. Her indefinite "in November" became a

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more indefinite "after Christmas." She wasn't ready, she told John when he asked her why she had put it off. She had nothing new to wear except the bonnet which Walt's mother had made for her in October. She couldn't marry Stephen without a single new dud. She wouldn't feel she was married at all, going about in the same old clothes she had been wearing for years. More, she had been—and still was—too busy to make anything. There was plenty of time to get married.

Too—the weather had stayed fine and Stephen had set about putting a new roof on the barn. When that was done he was going to give the smoke-house new weather-boarding and a few coats of paint. These were of more importance than getting married, Lesby had declared calmly. One could get married any time, but a barn roof had to be put on while the good weather lasted. Two years ago the roof had leaked and spoiled a lot of hay. It had been badly patched. No—one could not stop putting on a barn roof to start wedding preparations. When John went to Stephen about it, Stephen's reply was that it was "up to Lesby."

"If I didn't know Lesby to be a brave woman, Stephen, I'd say she was skeered o' marryin'. Don't look like she wants to give up her independence. Maybe if youse had a talk with her——"

"Lesby knows her business," said Stephen.

So the six yards of wine-colored silk lay still folded in the side-board drawer in the tissue paper in which it had come from the silk store at Toronto. Lesby had received a table-cloth from Mrs. Hethaby with an "M" embroidered in one corner. This she put into the drawer with the wine-colored silk. An under-garment had come from Norm's wife. It was a silk thing in one piece—shirt and drawers together. Lesby eyed it doubtfully before laying it away. She had always worn her underclothes in two pieces and she was not ready to change to anything that looked so complicated. Then the wife of her second brother, Sid, sent her a night-gown from New York, where they were now living. It was silk and it was pink and it was very thin. Lesby could see her hand through it when she put it under it. There was nothing but narrow ribbon straps to hold it up, and the wide lace insertion at the top would have showed her bosoms.

Lesby's face burned with shame as she eyed this last garment. She wadded it up indignantly without letting any one see it and stuffed it far back in the drawer and failed to write a word of thanks to the donor. Except for these gifts, the marriage of the two was as if it had never been seriously considered—or at least as if they had the rest of their lives to think about it.

To Stephen it gave the breathing spell that he needed. He pitched whole-heartedly into the work of roofing the barn. After this was done, the weather-boards would have to be put on the smoke-house and the painting finished before snow fell. But the snow held off. Though the air was cold, the skies held clear.

Any one seeing the two standing in the wind-swept path would have thought that the man was talking of the most commonplace things—of his hope that the snow would hold off another week or two, or of his satisfaction at the big crop of mangel-wurzels now safely stored in his bins, or of his prediction that they were going to have a mild winter. An onlooker would have thought that his small companion was agreeing with him and in no mood to argue any of his points, that she was longing to get back to her corner in the warm kitchen and take up her book again. Chuck sat in the doorway of the barn in plain view. He was greasing the double harness. Inside the loft above his head Jerg stood pitching hay down into the mangers below. Up at the house John stood humped over in the shelter of the lean-to watching Lesby sort the clothes for the next day's wash. With hundreds of acres of wheat land about them, with thousands of unbroken miles between them and the Arctic regions, the two could not have been less alone than if they stood on the sidewalk of a city street.

". . . and you was there all the time, your eyes tryin' to tell me—and I couldn't see it. What a fool! . . . It's hard for both of us—seein' each other every day like this. You mustn't look at me like you do sometimes. I need your help—I need it—like hell!"

Scarcely had the last brushful of paint been put on the smoke-house when John carried a too heavy arm-load of wood into the kitchen and sprained his back again and Lesby had her hands full caring for him. A wedding was out of the question with John flat of his back and winter just round the corner.

John refused to be carried up-stairs to his bedroom. It was too far from the kitchen, he told them. He would be lonely. So his bed was brought down-stairs into the sitting-room adjoining the kitchen and the door left open so he could see and hear all that went on. After he had been made comfortable in his new quar-

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ters, Stephen and Lesby met outside the lean-to door.

"Well, Stephen, I guess we'll have to put it off again."

"It looks like it."

"Winter's on us. We'd better wait till spring now."

"Whatever you say, Lesby."

Now each night Stephen sat alone in the kitchen with his book. Anne no longer read in her corner under the light of her small lamp. Each night she followed Lesby up to bed, and each night Stephen waited for the glance she sent back to him from the foot of the stairs—a glance that he answered in full measure and running over. But no words passed between them, for John lay in the sitting-room close by with the door ajar, as he insisted they leave it. He slept by fits and starts. Stephen could hear him sighing as he tried to sleep.

During the day Lesby seemed everywhere. There was no spot not filled with her vigorous presence—her booming voice—her firm tread. Only when her back was turned or her shoulders bent over this or that, did Stephen's eyes and Anne's meet. In that short moment the message held a world of meaning.

One day as Stephen returned on his horse from the Hempstead farm, he met Anne in the road nearly a mile from her gate. Bundled up in coat and scarf with her red cap pulled down about her ears, she looked very small in the wide expanse of white country as she trudged in snow to the top of her storm boots. Stephen dismounted and stood between her and the wind. He could only look at her. Her face seemed pale under the red cap.

"Lesby had the kitchen so hot," she said in answer to his look, "I had to get out."

"You've come too far. And you're shiverin'."

"I'm not cold. . . . I'm just—glad to see you."

"Don't, Anne! . . . Better get up in the saddle and I'll lead the horse back. You'll take your death standin' here."

"I'm not cold standin' between you an' Bay Boy like this. Let's stay a little. There's no sin in talkin'. Even Lesby couldn't mind that. . . . Stephen, I think she knows."

"Don't let that thought trouble you, Anne. That's the last thing Lesby would ever guess."

"But I'm afraid, Stephen. Sometimes I see her lookin' at me so funny. Stephen—I didn't come out only because the kitchen was hot. I knew you'd be riding back this way from Hempstead's—an' I wanted to tell you som'-p'n. You said we'd have to help each other, an' I've been figurin' out a way. You said you wanted me to help."

"I've got to have it, Anne."

"You said when a man made a mistake, he had to make the best of it—the best of the mistake." Her husky little voice had dropped lower and Stephen bent to catch the next words. It was scarcely a breath; the wind seemed to blow it away almost as soon as it came out. But Stephen heard and straightened a little.

"You mean—cut and run? . . . You don't mean that, Anne. You're too good a sport to mean that."

A spot of red had come into each cheek. She hastened to right herself in his eyes.

"You could make it square with Lesby. It would be easy. You could give her the farm—to her an' Father. We'd give un everything. We would take only ourselves—just you an' me. That'd be fair. The horses an' cows an' land an' everything—against you. It would balance with Lesby—it would, Stephen."

In her eagerness to hold him silent until she had finished, Anne had placed a mittened hand on his coat sleeve, and Stephen put his down over it and gripped it hard.

"Anne, dear——"

"It would balance, Stephen," she repeated. The words came tumbling out upon one another. "It would balance with Lesby. She loves land. She would have married Santee for the section of land he owns if you hadn't come along. She would. She could have stood him for the land he owns. She said love was nothin' but gettin' used to a person. She said she could stand any man she made up her mind to stand. An' that ain't love. It ain't love like we know it, Stephen. . . . And Lesby and Father could run the farm. They could run it with Jerg and Chuck to help. And you an' I could go away—an' be happy."

"Go away some dark night when they're asleep"—a wry smile was twitching Stephen's lips as he looked at her—"is that it? Like Russ Milliken and Minna Loshay are waitin' for a chance to do?"

"Oh, Stephen, don't say it in that voice. It would be easy if you'd see it. We could go to the States. There's lots of money there. It wouldn't take long for you to earn enough to buy another farm. I'd help save. The States is a big country like Canada an' you'd find plenty good land somewhere an' you could have other horses an' cows an' steers as good as you've got here."

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"You're cold, Anne. You're shiverin'. Come on."

"We'd have each other, Stephen. We wouldn't mind bein' poor for a while—if we had each other—Stephen——"

Stephen's hand still gripped the small mittened one on his arm.

"Anne—don't you see you're just makin' it all the harder for both of us?"

"You mean—you wouldn't?"

"I couldn't, Anne."

"I would be a good wife to you, Stephen."

"Lord! An' you're tryin' to make it easy. You're tryin' to help. You're makin' it so hard I can't see straight."

"Is it so hard to be happy, Stephen?"

Stephen suddenly clinched his jaws. "Now listen here, Anne. I've got to think of Lesby. I've given her my word. She expects me to marry her. John expects it. Everybody expects it. She and I are promised to each other. We've talked of marriage—of our children— Good Lord——"

"If you marry Lesby, you'll be doin' her a sin—lovin' me, Stephen. And I'd have to go away. I couldn't stay here—after you was hers. And where would I go? Where could I—without you?"

"You're tearin' my heart out by the roots, Anne."

"My heart's achin' too, Stephen."

"God, Anne, would you have me do this thing?"

"For our happiness. We've got to fight for that, Stephen. . . . Won't you think it over?"

"Come on. You're shakin' with cold. You'll get your death here." He swung her up into the saddle and leading the horse set out toward home.

VIII

Four days before Christmas, Rondy, the boy at the Hethabys', rode over from the Hethaby farm with an invitation for Anne to spend the week from the day before Christmas Day to the day after New Year's. There was going to be great doings, according to Rondy, the messenger: a big dinner on Christmas Day, a dance on New Year's Eve, another big dinner on New Year's Day—not counting "scads" of things which Mawr and Lora and Mabe had planned for in between.

The invitation left Anne speechless with dismay. A whole week without seeing Stephen. A whole week for Lesby to put her hand on his shoulder as they leaned together over the plans of the new silo to be built in the spring.

By the time Rondy had disposed of half a dozen of Lesby's hot doughnuts fresh from the kettle of smoking fat and had washed them down with two glasses of freshly churned buttermilk, Stephen was waiting to show him over the place. And while the two visited the white-faced Herefords and the new Jersey cow for which Stephen had paid "a-plenty" according to Lesby, and Rondy had seen the drove of Poland-China hogs and the trio of Duroc sows, during which he had confided to Stephen that he was not interested in farming but wanted to go off to school somewhere and learn how to build bridges, up at the house Anne was saying, not by any means for the first time:

"But I can't, Lesby."

"Shucks! Don't be a fool. Why can't youse? Go bring down that blue silk dress of yours an' let me look at un." But Anne made no move to do so.

After supper was over and the dishes done, Lesby spoke again of the blue dress. John dozed by the stove; Stephen sat reading under the hanging-lamp. "Go on up an' get it," she repeated. "I'll let the hem down a little an' it'll do for the dance night. And bring the bloomers."

Anne obeyed slowly, only to say as she laid the garments across Lesby's lap: "But I don't want to go, Lesby. I'd rather stay at home."

"Course you would. That's what's the matter with you. You're always hangin' round home with your nose stuck in a book or cloud-gazin' down at the crick, an' all the other young folks are out dancin' an' havin' a good time. You'll be an old maid before you know where you are. . . . They're goin' to have a dance on New Year's Eve. That means some young folks from Collinswood—maybe Owen Sound. How do you know but you'll meet some young fellow that'll take a shine to youse?"

Anne's pale cheeks flamed. She dared not look in the direction where Stephen sat reading.

"Um—" Lesby was brazenly holding the bloomers up between her and the light in full view of the reading figure opposite.

"Um—that's what I thought—thin enough in the seat to shoot straws through," she announced loudly. "What youse been doin' in un? Slidin' down the suller door?"

Anne had snatched at the boldly spraddled garment, her face crimson; but Lesby had snorted and jerked them out of reach.

"Shucks! Stephen's saw lots of bloomers in his life. Don't be silly. Um—I guess I can make

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youse another pair in time. There's a yard o' this stuff layin' round here somewheres. It won't take more'n that to cover youse. . . . Good thing it ain't me needin' bloomers an' expectin' to get it outen a yard—eh, Stephen? And me an axe handle acrost."

Stephen laughed, and Lesby's laugh joined his. As Anne ran up the stairs she heard the two still laughing.

The laughter had wakened John and he sat up. "Did you say I'd better go to bed, Lesby?"

"Yas—I guess you'd best. It's after nine." Lesby's bosom was still shaking with laughter. "Bank the fire before you go to bed, will youse, Stephen? I guess Anne won't come down again. . . . What about takin' Anne over to the Hethabys' day after to-morrow?" she asked as she got up. "Can you spare Jerg to drive her over in the sled?"

"I might as well take her in the car. It'll be more comfortable. The roads will be all right if it don't snow any more between now and then."

"It's a bit of a risk this time o' year. No tellin' what'll blow up before you start back. Youse don't want to be marooned at Hethaby's or get stuck half-way with a stalled engine."

"It's not goin' to snow. I can make it in the car all right."

"The Percherons are more reliable in December. They could make it in snow to their bellies. Best have Jerg take her in the sled."

"We'll see what it's like." And Stephen went back to his book.

Two mornings later the skies held clear and cold. There was no sign of a storm. Instead of having to walk through snow and climb into the sled behind the brown Percherons as she had expected, Anne was surprised to find the car waiting by the old tree stump outside the kitchen door and Stephen beside it in boots and fur overcoat. He took her bag without a word and helped her into the front seat and got in beside her at the wheel. Then he had turned the car about in the narrow space between the kitchen wall and the pasture fence and they were going down the narrow lane to the gate with Lesby's voice calling out something they did not hear.

The road lay white and glistening with a scant six inches of snow and the car glided over it without a sound. Anne glanced up at her companion to find him smiling.

"What's so funny?"

"I was thinkin' about them bloomers——"

"I don't think you ought to laugh at Lesby when she's vulgar like that."

Stephen's smile broadened. "Oh—so that's why you wouldn't look at me these last two days, is it?"

Anne continued to stare straight ahead. "When Lesby says those things she isn't funny. She's vulgar and common."

"Then I must be vulgar and common too. There's something in the way she says a thing that makes me laugh. I can't help it."

"Jokes don't have to be vulgar to be funny."

"No, they don't have to," he rejoined, amused; "but most the good ones are." He gave a low chuckle. "I've laughed more since I've known Lesby——"

"You can't forget her! You don't want to!"

"Entirely, you mean?"

"Yes—don't you want to?"

"To be honest—no. I'd hate it like the dickens if any one told me I was never goin' to see Lesby again. She's a darn fine woman."

"You love her!" Anne flashed a glance at him, her eyes misty. A red spot had come to either cheek.

"You know well enough who it is I love."

"Then why do you keep talkin' about Lesby?"

"You began it. . . . Looky here, Anne, let's not quarrel. This is our first chance bein' together without John layin' in the next room half awake or Lesby— Hups! There comes Lesby again." Anne was smiling at him and he smiled back. "You're lookin' terrible pretty with that soft fur round your neck and that color in your cheeks. You ought to always have red in your cheeks, Anne. You're lots too pale. Do you eat enough? Whenever you're at the table you seem to be pecking at things like a little chicken. You ought to drink lots of milk —a quart a day."

"I couldn't get a quart of milk down my throat every day. . . . You're goin' too slow. The engine'll die down."

"We don't want to get to the Hethabys' too soon. When this ride's over, I'll have to come all the way back alone. . . . Look here, Anne —maybe it'll be a long time before we get the chance to be alone again. There's nobody comin' along the road—not a soul in sight as far as we can see—and we're in a closed car—and we've never kissed." She had shrunk from him. "Come on—give me your lips."

"We haven't any right to kiss."

"There's nothin' wicked in two people kissin' if they love each other like you and I do."

"But you're promised to Lesby."

"Damn!" Stephen was staring ahead at the road again. Silence fell between them and the

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white world slid past. Anne was the first to speak.

"As long as you're still promised to Lesby—and are going to marry her—she's the one—you can kiss."

"All right." Stephen's brows were together under the visor of his fur cap. "All right. She's not so hard to kiss. And she knows how to. She ain't afraid to put all she's got into it." Anne had shrunk down into her seat again, and Stephen continued to stare straight ahead, as he sent the car along the smooth white road. For a time nothing more was said and the wintry landscape raced past.

It was Stephen this time who broke the silence.

"And look here, Anne. I want to tell you something. When Lesby and I are married, it'll be too late for any kissin' between you and me. It'll be a sin then. It ain't a sin now. Get that. It's so. There's no sin in two people kissin' if it don't go no further. But when Lesby's my wife I'm goin' to play the game square. I'm no Russ Milliken to sleep with one woman and lay with anothern in the dark. . . . And unless I got you mighty wrong, you ain't no Minna Loshay to allow it. But there ain't nothin' wrong in our kissin' as long as Lesby ain't got a legal claim on me. When she's mine and I'm hers—after I've held her that first night, then it'll be a sin to kiss you or to want you like I do now. But until that night— God, Anne—give me your lips here."

Anne found her voice. "If you promise—never to kiss Lesby afterward—till you're married——"

"Damn!"

"Oh—don't you see——"

"I can't give any such promise. You've got no right to ask it. I'd only break it. Lesby's a darn good-lookin' woman, and when she turns them lips of hers my way——"

"You love her!"

"Don't be a fool. You know who I love. But I ain't goin' to give no promise I can't keep."

At that, silence fell between them, a silence that was not broken until Stephen turned the car in through the gateway of the Hethaby farm.

"Jerg will come after you the day after New Year's," he said; but before he could say more or Anne could reply, the Hethaby flock had caught sight of the car and was pouring out into the snowy yard.

IX

Jerg did not come for Anne a week later in the box sled, as Stephen had said at parting. Anne, in the sitting-room of the Hethaby farmhouse playing Corona with Dode, heard Rondy's shout from the direction of the kitchen:

"They've sent for y'. The car's here. Stephen's come—Stephen MacLaren's come—Anne!"

Anne sat glued to her chair. Stephen had come for her. What did it mean? Her heart seemed to swell and fill her bosom, leaving no room for anything else. She was conscious that Dode's wise black eyes were on her, and she bent over the Corona board.

She could hear Stephen's voice in the kitchen. Then came Mrs. Hethaby's hearty laugh and a "Stephen's here, Anne," in Mabe's soft voice from the doorway. But when Anne reached the kitchen, Stephen in fur coat, his face red with cold, was standing at the table drinking a glass of Mawr's cider; and except for a "Get your things, Anne; we're starting right back," he did not notice her.

A wail rose from Dode as Anne disappeared to pack her bag. "Gee, Mawr, they ain't startin' right back?"

"We'd better, Dodie," said Stephen. "A storm's threatenin'."

"Can't I go back with Anne, Mawr? She ast me."

"Of course you can't," put in Lora from across the room where she stood chopping something in a bowl. "How'd you get home again?"

Dode made a mouth at her oldest sister for interfering. "Pawr'd come for me. . . . Can't I, Mawr?"

"Pawr wouldn't consider it for a minute, Dodie. This snow's liable to hang on the rest the winter. It looks like we're in for a big one. . . . Besides, Lesby wouldn't stand you till spring, would she, Stephen?" At that Dode ran out of the room, passing Anne coming in with her bag.

Stephen put down his glass, the beads of cider hanging to his upper lip. "Lesby can stand for a good deal, Mrs. Hethaby."

"If she can stand you—is that it?" rejoined Mrs. Hethaby. "When is it to be, Stephen? I thought you and Lesby was goin' to be married last fall. And here it is January."

"Not till spring, Lesby says now—and she's the boss."

"Well, you're gettin' a mighty fine woman, Stephen. . . . And," she added, laughing, "you won't have to shake the sheets to find her."

A hearty laugh burst from Stephen. He was

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still laughing as he took the bag from Anne and led the way out. Anne followed, her face aflame.

Pawr, standing in the doorway of the barn a little later, looked after the car as it disappeared down the long straight road leading westward under a leaden sky.

"Right bang into that storm." He shook his head. "Stephen is so darn proud o' that car that he don't show good sense. That snow's goin' to be on 'em before they've went a mile."

"I dunno," rejoined Rondy at his side; "they're sure travellin'."

"They won't be soon if the snow gets up to the dipperenshal and she gets to scrapin'. They'll get stuck as sure as you're a foot high." He entered the barn and spatted the broad haunch of a dapple-gray horse as he passed the stall. "I wouldn't give a team o' Clydes for the best car made. When you get in a blindin' snow-storm, what car's got enough sense to keep the road—or know the way back home? No siree, I wouldn't give a team o' Clydes ——"

Pawr was not far wrong. Stephen's car had not gone more than two miles when the snow began falling in earnest and he was forced to slow down. In spite of the steadily swinging pendulum, the driving snow blurred the windshield until the world ahead of them was blanketed in a murky fog.

"It's comin' down hard, but we'll have it at our backs soon," said Stephen.

At that Anne sat up and looked at him, puzzled.

"No—it's comin' from the northwest. We'll be facin' it all the way." At his silence, she said softly, "Are you mad at me?"

"Mad at you? Why should I be mad at you?"

"But you didn't look at me when I came into the kitchen back there at Hethaby's. You just told me to go and get ready."

"I couldn't trust myself to look at you. I hadn't seen you for a week. Mrs. Hethaby would have been scandalized if I had done what I wanted to—and her knowin' I'm promised to Lesby."

Anne shrank deeper into the cushions, her face burning. The car had reached a cross-road and Stephen turned south and speeded up again.

"Stephen"—Anne caught his arm—"you should have turned the other way. The farm's north of us."

"We're not goin' back to the farm, Anne. We're headed for Toronto. We're goin' to be married. . . . There ain't nothin' goin' to stop me, Anne," for she had sunk weakly against the cushions and covered her face with her hands. "You couldn't have done anything better to win your argument for runnin' off together than by goin' away and stayin' a week. It's been a year to me. I couldn't get my mind on a thing. I couldn't do anything but wander round, crazy to see you. It showed me what my life would be if I had to live without you. . . . I've thought it all out, and you're right. We've got to fight for our happiness."

"What about Lesby?" But the protest sounded weak and faint in Anne's own ears.

"I've got it all mapped out. We'll find a minister to marry us as soon as we get in Toronto. When Lesby finds we haven't come back to-night, she'll think we've stayed at the Hethabys' on account of the storm. In the mornin', my wife and I—listen to that—my wife and I will go back and tell her all about it. She's too good a sport——"

"Oh, I couldn't face her, Stephen. I couldn't face Lesby after I married you. We must turn round and go back."

"Steady there!" as she laid a hand on the wheel. "You don't want to land us in a ditch, do you? . . . We're not goin' back, Anne, until we're married."

"Oh, Stephen, I couldn't face her."

"You don't have to. I'll face her and you can get behind me. It'll be over and done with and she can't help it."

"But, Stephen, we could go right on to the States. We don't have to go back. We could send word. We could let her have the farm ——"

"I'm not goin' to let her have the farm, Anne. That idea is foolish. She and I can run it just the same. We'll let her and John have the house and you and I can build us anothern somewhere on the place—over on the slope by the maple grove—how's that?"

Anne shook her head, her eyes misty with unshed tears. "It wouldn't work, Stephen. We must get right away. We can't be close to Lesby. She's big and strong. She'd get you away from me. You'd be with her all the time. You'd want to. You'd forget me. I'd lie alone——"

"Good Lord, Anne! What are you talkin' about? Wouldn't you be my wife? I ain't that sort. I ain't a Russ Milliken, wantin' two women. I only want you. . . . You belong to me, Anne. We belong to each other. I knew it that day when I grabbed you up in my arms when you was scared about them killin' the bronze turkey. I knew right then that you was the wo-

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man I wanted. My heart never beat like that before in my life. And when I was holdin' you that minute, your heart was tellin' me the same thing. I been achin' for you ever since, Anne. I got to have you. And you want me. Your eyes have said it a hundred times back there in the kitchen when we didn't dare say anything with the others round." He slowed down the car, taking his eyes from the white, storm-swept road ahead long enough to bend down to her. "After we're married—after we've been to that minister's—I get my kiss—a real one, don't I? . . . You ain't cryin'? You ought to be happy on your weddin' day."

"I'm not cryin'. . . . But I'm afraid, Stephen."

"Afraid of what?"

"I don't know."

"Well, after to-night you'll never be afraid again. I'll never be so far away from you that your voice won't reach me. I promise you that." Stephen's eyes were on the dimming road again, and silence fell between them while the stormy world seemed to heave and toss between earth and heaven.

"She's sure comin' down." And a little later: "I don't quite get it. We ought to be close onto the main highway leadin' down from Collinswood by this time."

Anne's pale little face peered with him. "Do you think we're lost?"

"No, of course not. I just missed that highway leadin' down from Collinswood."

But there was something in his tone that did not escape her ears. "We are lost, Stephen. . . . Look, the wind's veered. I hadn't noticed before. It's blowin' the snow against us now. It's not at our backs any more."

"Your guess is as good as mine, but I'd say it was us that had veered, not the wind. Looks to me like we're headed the other way."

Anne gave a low cry of alarm. Then they were lost. They would wander round until the car stuck and refused to move. Then they would freeze to death.

"It's our punishment, Stephen. It's God's wrath because we've sinned against Lesby."

"That's Old Testament stuff, Anne."

"But it's God just the same. He's punishin' us for runnin' off when you're promised to marry Lesby."

"Don't be silly. He don't send scourges and plagues any more. He's not sendin' down floods and turnin' people into salt." Stephen had slowed down the car until they seemed scarcely to be moving. The wild, wind-driven flakes seemed to be the only things with life in a frenzied world. "Besides—we couldn't help lovin' each other. It just came. We didn't have anything to do with it."

"Yes, we did. I did. I prayed that I'd win your love from Lesby—that you'd see me before it was too late."

"Too late?"

"Yes—before you married Lesby. I prayed Him not to let Lesby have you. The fault's mine. I'm to blame."

Stephen gave a short laugh. "Well, you can bet He's not holdin' that up against you, Anne. . . . Now where in hell did they come from?" He was squinting through the blurred glass at his side. Anne peered with him. A long line of cypress trees had suddenly loomed out of the gray murkiness.

"It's the wind-break north of Bixby's," said Anne.

"Bixby's?" A relieved whoop broke from Stephen. "What d'you think of that? We ain't more'n seven or eight miles from the farm. We been travellin' in a cir— Damn!"

Stephen turned off the engine and flung an arm about Anne as the car tilted sideways. Then they felt it settle slowly and come to rest against the sloping snow-bank.

"What—happened?" came Anne's smothered voice.

Stephen freed her. "Two wheels in the ditch." He braced himself to keep from sliding down on top of her and felt for the door at his back. A blast of stinging snow swirled into the car as he forced open the door and backed out. Anne saw his tall figure silhouetted against the stormy world as he stood there.

"We've gone off the road," he called in to her. "There's no rightin' her. I'm in snow to my hips." They would have to get out of there immediately, he told her, or they would be buried to their eyebrows. The snow was getting deeper every minute. "This car will be out of sight in less'n an hour. You ain't skeered?"

He peered in at her and Anne put up a hand and touched his face.

"N-no, Stephen. I'm—not scared."

"That's the sport! Feel around for those two rugs back there. Be quick now, and don't ask anything. We got to hurry."

Stephen was already fumbling in his pocket under his heavy coat for his jack-knife. He brought it out; and taking one of the rugs from her, cut it in half. Bidding her sit with her legs stuck out through the door, he began to wind the heavy woollen strips about each of her feet and legs like one might wind a surgeon's bandage. This done, he took up the other rug and

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wrapping it about her, took her in his arms as if she were a baby and slammed the car door shut with a jerk of his elbow. He would get the Niss'pong truck concern to dig the thing out as soon as they could get to it.

"Lesby's goin' to be awful mad—" came Anne's voice smothered against him.

"Don't talk—don't make me talk. I'll need all my wind." And Stephen set out against the driving storm.

At midnight Lesby built up the fire again, for it had nearly died down to an ash while she dozed in her chair. Her back ached from sitting so long and she took herself off to Stephen's room and laid herself down on his bed, leaving the door open between her and the kitchen. It had stopped snowing. The temperature had dropped. The night had settled down to a hard freeze; she could hear the surface of the snow groan and crack as it tightened under the cold. John slept, now that the wind had gone down.

She must have fallen asleep, for she sat up suddenly conscious of a sound outside. She got up and went into the kitchen. The clock on the shelf behind the stove was on the stroke of three. In another hour Jerg would be coming up for the milk-pails. The sound came again as she stood there. A boot had scraped at the back door—Stephen's. She would have known it among a thousand.

Stephen found himself being pulled into the warm kitchen—too warm. His head reeled and he stood trying to balance himself while Lesby took the burden from his arms. She unrolled the fur robe from Anne and stood her on her feet. Stephen had sunk into a chair.

Some time later Lesby came down from upstairs and found him still sitting humped over in the chair with his arms hanging down between his knees.

"She's all right. I give her a whiskey rub and she's sleepin' like a babe."

She came to him and took off his cap and brushed his hair off his forehead, and the touch of her hands cleared his head.

"Lesby——"

"Why, Stephen—you're suffern!"

"My feet——"

Half an hour later he was sitting on the edge of his bed with a blanket over his night-shirt and his feet stuck into a tub of snow while Lesby squatted by rubbing the circulation back into his legs.

She scolded as she rubbed. "You ought've had more sense. I told youse to send Jerg with the sled an' horses. A car's no good at buckin' snow. Youse had a close call with these feet of yours. Another hour trompin' round in weather ten b'low an' there's no tellin' what'd happened."

She pulled his feet out of the snow and took them into her aproned lap as she squatted, and rubbed them vigorously as she had done his legs. "Now roll in bed there an' cover up an' I'll hot up the coffee." She went off, carrying the tub of snow against her stomach, and Stephen lay back with a tired sigh. The touch of her strong hands still tingled his feet and legs deliciously. It was good to be home again and to know that Anne was safe in her bed upstairs. It was good to hear Lesby moving about in the kitchen close at hand, to feel that he had been spared the indignity of her scorn.

Then she was at his side with the cup of coffee and its fragrance kissed his nostrils as he sat up.

X

April, and the creek running full in its grassy banks and the wild-cherry thicket in leaf again.

From where Anne sat on the sunny hillside, the pastures and wheat-fields which had lain under the warm snow all winter shone like rich velvet in the warm sunshine. Sometimes Anne wondered which was the most wonderful thing in the world—sunshine or running water. In midsummer, it was the running water. In the springtime, sunshine had it. Now, the sunshine was filling earth and sky with a golden flood. It had turned the hollows into pools of honey. The soft green slopes lay bathing in it. It seemed a living, pulsating thing which she had only to reach out and gather into her arms to feel its heart beating against hers. It was everywhere, in everything, touching her face, caressing her with hands soft as a baby's.

There was borne to her as she sat there with her hands propping her chin the mysteriously mingled odors of hidden wild flowers bursting. She loved that smell. It of all things told her that the winter was over, the winter of uncertainty and temptation and doubt. Yet it had been a winter of strange joy, for throughout it all Lesby had not spoken once of marrying Stephen. Now April had come. It was spring. Still not a word—no preparations. The wine-colored silk had not been cut into. It had not been taken out of the bottom drawer of the side-board. Lesby went about her work as if she

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had forgotten about getting married—as if she had changed her mind. . . .

Changed her mind! This ran in Anne's thoughts like a strain of sweet music. What if Lesby had changed her mind? Then she and Stephen would not have to run away. Stephen could keep his farm. She would have her creek and cherry thicket. Lesby would give them her blessing with a shrug of her big shoulders—glad to be freed of a promise given in jest that day by Stephen's bed. . . . Anne's day-dreams reached up and up to the sailing clouds; they were borne into the far blue reaches of the sky on the wings of a flock of geese, tiny pin-points flying northward.

Stephen on his bay rode along the boundary fence which separated his land from the Millikens'. The winter had sagged many of the posts. As he rode he could see Jerg plowing the bottom ten. Farther out in the west twenty-acre strip where Bet had kicked a hole in his belly the year before, Chuck was planting corn.

The cows were moving slowly out toward the south pasture where the richer grass beckoned. The big Holstein was leading. The young Jersey calves had lagged behind to nose in the brimming branch whose waters glistened in the bright sun.

Stephen's eyes swept the fields, his glance coming to rest at the distant barn where the new silo was rising against the sky. Two men were hanging like beetles to its rim. The sound of their hammers came faintly to his ears. It would soon be finished. . . . Stephen's eyes came back to his fields again as the bay under him, wary of ground-hog holes, picked a safe trail. His fields. His meadows. His cattle. He had once thought—for only a little time—that he could give them up, that he could give up his white-faced steers, his fine milch cows and young heifers. He had thought he could go away from under this sky, from this rich earth, from these fields and meadows that gave their best for him. But for a blinding snow-storm which had turned him home again, he might not now be here.

There had been days at the first hint of spring when he had been on the verge of telling Lesby how it was with him and Anne. The time to do it was while she was still silent on the subject of their own marriage. But for Lesby to be silent on a subject was no sign that she was not thinking of it. This had held him back. This kept the weight pressing on his shoulders. Sometimes he thought that Lesby knew, that she had seen how it was with him and Anne. For nothing escaped Lesby. At such times he hoped that she would come to his rescue before he degraded himself in her memory. But more often he felt that Lesby would never guess or see, that she would as easily think the rich south strip gone sterile as that she was not the woman he most desired.

Stephen was not a praying man. He had never to his knowledge got down on his knees and prayed. He had never felt that he had anything to pray for. He had never before run up against anything that he could not straighten out with his fists or his wits. But now he was faced with something which had no solid body for his hands to grip—and it seemed to him that his wits had scattered.

He had never been afraid to face anything; he had never hesitated to grab hold of a disagreeable thing and spread it to the air. For the first time he was turning his back. He hadn't the guts to face Lesby with the truth. The weight he was carrying was his disgust for himself. Though he had never prayed before, now daily he sent up a prayer from his saddle as he rode over his fields. . . . "Wake me up, God. Make me snap out of it." This was the burden of his prayer.

Stephen swung the bay from the fence and the horse set off on a trot across the pasture. They dipped into a hollow and up again and crossed the narrow level into the maple grove. Here the bay came to a walk, threading his way in and out among the trees to plunge his muzzle at last into the tumbling creek. . . . Stephen filled his lungs. He took off his hat and let the cool wind blow against his face. Life was very good. The earth was a generous woman—open-armed, fruitful. She gave freely. It was good to be alive and strong, able to work from morning till night and to eat and enjoy one's food and to be so tired at night that one could sleep without a dream. . . . God—if he could fall off asleep as soon as he got in bed. But to lie flat of his back staring up into the dark for an hour before sleep would come, that was hard—to lie staring into blackness with Lesby's warm, comforting spirit breathing evenly and deep on his right, and he not daring to turn and face the small, tremulous one pressed against his heart with the smell of the woods in her hair and her dark, misty eyes hidden against his shoulder. Then Life did not seem such an easy thing—but a very hard one indeed.

John sat on an upturned keg in the sun near the wood-pile. His half-shut eyes were on the new silo now rising above the barn roof. The

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pounding of the hammers was music in his ears. The farm was prospering under Stephen's management. He had a good head—a good, sound business head. He was not afraid to tackle things. New roof to the barn. New machinery. New harness. New young cattle. And now the silo. It was more than John had dreamed of. Even Norm could not have done any better. Life was very good. John smiled as he dozed.

Lesby had come to the kitchen door to drive the hens from the steps. They scattered wildly from the vigorous swish of an apron as she came down the path. At the horse-trough she picked up an overturned pail and rinsing it out with one hand, set it upside down over the gate-post and stood shading her eyes to look at the mounting silo.

"Most done." John's voice came from beside the wood-pile at her back. "Stephen said April —an' this is April."

"We'll be puttin' fodder in it inside a month," Lesby returned, coming to him.

"Not a month. That's a bit too quick."

Lesby jerked a thumb in the direction of the planting Chuck against the horizon to the west. "That corn's goin' in fast. It'll be up in no time." She had righted a box; and seated herself by him. "This time next year you won't know our cows."

"Why don't you an' Stephen set a date, Lesby? Seem like you two ain't thinkin' any more about gettin' married."

"Plenty time to marry. Youse can't do two things at onct thout one of 'em suffern. An' we don't want nawthin' to happen to the silo —all it's costin'."

"But I don't see how it'd hurt for youse to be cuttin' into that wine silk. Youse could get Mrs. Jeppy over to help make it. She's a good hand at cuttin' an' fittin'. An' you ain't easy to fit. . . . She charges only two a day. It wouldn't take long to finish it up. Then it'd be ready."

"There's som'p'n in that. But we ain't likely to marry till fall. Stephen's set on buildin' an ice-house this summer. He says with all that ice goin' to waste on the pond an' the hot summers we have, we ought to have one. I tell him the silo's costin' a-plenty. But he's set on buildin' it."

"That means you won't get married till after harvest again." John's voice was close to a whimper.

But Lesby was squinting in the direction of the creek. "Has Anne been in since mornin'? I want her to go over to Milliken's an' get me a settin' o' duck eggs. Sarah's got good Pekins."

"Youse know how Anne hates to go to Milliken's. It'll take a week o' beggin' to get her started."

"If I'm goin' to hatch any I want to get un under a hen right off. We never had any ducks. I'd like to try my hand."

"They're gluttons for grain."

"We got plenty grain."

"They'll gobble up everything from the hens. They're worse'n Dominecker roosters—an' that's sayin' som'p'n."

"We got a-plenty," repeated Lesby calmly. "Did old Snell say anything about how Sarah was when he come by this mornin'? Or did you see him?"

"She's still grievin' over losin' her baby." John spat. "Russ Milliken ought to be horse-whupped."

"I don't know that Russ is all to blame for Sarah losin' her baby," rejoined Lesby. "Sarah pitched in an' scrubbed floors an' did big washin's an' workin' like a plow-horse instead o' goin' light an' makin' Minna help. An' she mooned around lookin' miserable. No woman can carry her child thataway an' expect it to be born kickin'. She thought she'd make Russ feel bad for the way he's been carryin' on with Minna, an' here she's the one that's feelin' bad, not Russ."

John sat filling his pipe with an energy that drove the tobacco down firmly into the bowl. He liked Sarah and felt sorry for her. It stuck in his craw that his neighbor was still gallivanting round with his calf-eyed sister-in-law, and his first-born not four months dead.

"Sarah went at it wrong," Lesby was saying. "There's a right an' a wrong way for a woman to go at a man."

"I guess. . . . I wonder how it's goin' to end."

"That's for the Millikens to settle, not me," said Lesby coolly. Her eyes were on the distant field where a bay horse and his rider had appeared.

"Did youse have a talk with Stephen?" John's glance had followed hers.

"Yas. There's nawthin' the matter. Everything's in good shape. No need for us to worry about money, Pa. This time next year we'll be sittin' pretty."

"Well, Stephen don't set his saddle as pretty as he ust," rejoined John dryly. "Youse can see that with half an eye."

"A man can't get a hole kicked in his belly an' go on as if nothin' had happened." Lesby's eyes still followed the approaching horseman.

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"It was a bad cut—almost clean crost him. Lucky he ain't doubled up like old Snell."

Stephen had slowed the bay into a walk as they came up the long lane that led to the barn. His head was bent. His shoulders drooped as if he had come a long way.

"He didn't look any too good last fall," John went on. "Then he seemed all right for a time this winter. But as soon as spring come, he got to lookin' queer again. Youse ought to marry him, Lesby. Then youse could look after him better. There's nothin' like a wife to get a man in shape. You could rub him nights an' get them stitches limbered up. Maybe they're beginnin' to grow to his innards an' draggin' him down like."

"Yas—maybe."

They saw Stephen glance up at the silo as he passed it and lift a hand in salute to the two men on the ground. Then his shoulders seemed to sag again. Lesby got up and shook her apron at some hens that had come snooping.

Stephen had dismounted at the lane gate and she crossed the lot toward him, rounding the white sow that lay grunting in the sun with her tugging litter.

"It's goin' up fast, ain't it?" she called. She jerked a thumb at the silo.

His shoulders straightened at her voice and he nodded, a smile meeting hers as he opened the gate and led the bay through.

"Better keep off," he warned as she reached him. "I smell to heaven."

She saw then that his hands and clothes were grimy and stained with blood, and his tanned face smeared from brow to chin.

"What's the matter? Did youse take a header?"

"The young chestnut dropped her foal out in the north pasture. She had a bad time. I came on her not a minute too soon. She was groanin' like a woman in childbirth pains."

"Youse mated her too early, Stephen."

"I don't think so. But the foal come hindquarters first and I had a hell of a job. I wished for you—but there wasn't any time to come after you. I had to work quick or we'd lost 'em both."

"Is the mare all right?"

"Yes. I'll bring her in this afternoon. The foal's perfect."

"A filly?"

"Yeah. Pretty as a picture." They had reached the barn and Stephen lifted the saddle off the bay and swung it up to its hook. "I sure had to work quick. I wished for you a dozen times before it was over."

Lesby had already removed the bridle, and the horse made for his stall to plunge his nose into the feed-box. He whinnied when he found it empty and looked back over his shoulder at the two. Lesby came to his head and lifted the wooden slide of the grain chute and let a measure of oats roll down under his nose. Stephen was already wielding the currycomb and brush and Lesby crossed her arms on the bay's withers and watched the process, her eyes more often on Stephen's face than on the rapidly moving hands. He seemed to have lost his weariness. His eyes glowed with feeling as he told of the young mare's delivery of her first foal.

". . . and then she seemed to make a tremenjous effort—just like a woman would've done. Lord, she was a sport, Lesby. I never saw a mare try any harder. An' you bet I was pullin' to beat the band. Then it come. In another minute it would have smothered. When I put it under the mare's nose, it was all she needed. She was as limp as a rag by that time, but the minute she smelt that little body against her, she raised up and begun lickin' it. A woman with her first-born couldn't have acted any more tickled."

"I'd hated to lost it," said Lesby.

"Yeah—or the mare either." Stephen whacked the currycomb against the wooden partition and tossed it and the brush into the box at the stall's opening as they came out. John had moved into the shade. He was sound asleep with his feet on the box where Lesby had been sitting.

"John's not as perky as he was, Lesby."

"That's what he just said about you."

Stephen shot a glance at her. "Me? I'm all right. Nothing the matter with me."

"No, you're not all right," she rejoined bluntly. "You can't fool me, Stephen. . . . What you say to goin' down to Montreal for a little time? Go over to the States, maybe. Jerg an' Chuck an' I can get along."

They had reached the back door and Lesby flirted her apron at the screen before she opened it. "I'll pay the silo men off; you won't have to wait for that," she added as they entered the kitchen.

Stephen had passed on to the threshold of his room and stood looking into it. Behind him he could hear Lesby building up the fire in the cook-stove.

"Pa seemed to think I ought to marry youse right off so I could see to youse better—rubbin' you at nights like." She was at the water-pail again, filling a pot by dipperfuls. "He thought

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maybe that stitchin' in your belly needed limberin' up. But if rubbin' was all you needed," she went on, now at the stove busy with the lids, "youse an' I wouldn't let not bein' married stand in the way of me doin' it."

"I guess you've seen me stripped often enough to've got used to it by now," he rejoined.

"Yas. But it ain't rubbin' you need."

"I thought—we were goin' to get married this spring."

"Time enough to get married. It's more important that you get well an' strong. I want youse to be like you was when you first come here."

At that Stephen turned to face the room. She had gone to the sink to wash some potatoes and he stood looking at her fine, rounded figure in its plain print dress. There was not a handsomer head in the country than hers with its reddish hair in braids wound around it. Something was urging him to go and put his arms around her waist and press his lips down on hers. He wanted to feel her against him. But his feet refused to move.

"Youse might go in the car," she said. She was scrubbing the potatoes with a small brush with her head bent to the task. "It'd be a great trip down to Montreal."

"In the car?" he found himself repeating rather stupidly, his thoughts racing ahead wildly.

"Yas. Youse could stop in towns along the way for your eatin' an' sleepin' an' take your time."

For a moment Stephen was unable to speak. The suggestion had struck him with dismay.

"You're makin' it too damn easy, Lesby!" The words burst from Stephen.

"That's what I want to do."

Stephen felt the blood beat up strong in him. It was making him hot from head to foot. He had the feeling that his face was red as fire. What did she mean? Did she know? He dared not ask. Her voice had been calm, even. No—she could not possibly know. But it was easy—too easy. It wasn't fair. He turned away and disappeared within his room.

When he came out again after a bath and change of clothes, he was met by the appetizing smell of frying ham and boiling peas as he entered the kitchen. Lesby was coming up out of the cellar with a crock of butter and a jug of cream.

She greeted him with a broad smile and a "Well—you look better already. . . . You're sure a handsome man, Stephen."

Stephen had to laugh. "A wash-up and clean duds can work wonders. I dropped off ten years in that dirty suds."

Lesby put the crock and jug down on the table and stood smiling at him with her hands on her broad hips. "I wouldn't trade youse for any other man in the world," she said with slow deliberation.

"Yet you're sendin' me to Montreal."

Her large, even teeth gleamed whiter between her full red lips. "So youse can come back for the wedden," she rejoined.

"What if I don't come back?" Stephen tried to speak lightly.

She sent across to him one of her rare, quick smiles. "Go 'long. You'll come back. Better wake Pa up. Tell him dinner's about ready."

When Stephen had left the kitchen, Lesby went to the side-board.

Added color had heightened the richness of her face. With a glance toward the back screen through which she could see that the path leading up from the barn was clear, and a smile that seemed to dare anybody to try to stop her, she felt far back in the bottom drawer, and brought out the pink silk nightgown which the wife of her second brother, Sid, had sent her from New York the year before.

Lesby held the pink thing out before her at arm's length in all its shameful sheerness. Her brows were together, her lips against her teeth. It would take a bold hussy to wear a thing like that. She held it up against her bosom, letting it hang down in front of her—only for an instant it rested there. It had scarcely touched her before she caught it up and wadded it into a ball, her face burning as if it were on fire.

"You old fool, you!"

She wheeled suddenly and jerking the pot of potatoes off the stove, poked the shameful pink thing into the blazing depths and slammed the pot down upon it.

XI

A sentence here. A sentence there. A word. A look. Out in the open. Under the sky. In the sunny path. By the pig-lot gate. Down by the horse-trough. Beside the well-pump. A sentence here. A sentence there. A word. A look. Not daring to touch. Not daring to linger. Not daring to look long. . . . "She made it easy" . . . "played in our hands" . . . "can't help it" . . . "sorry" . . . "Montreal" . . . "when the silo's done" . . . "couldn't help lovin' " . . . "send word back from Toronto" . . . "never even kissed" . . . "when we're mar-

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ried." . . . So the days passed for them. So they made their plans.

For days Stephen's trunk had stood in the sitting-room where Pa slept at night, and as the clothes were mended and darned by Anne and washed and ironed by Lesby, they were packed away ready for the journey.

It was plain to John that a change had come to Stephen, now that he had made up his mind to go. He was brighter; he smiled oftener. The troubled look had gone out of his eyes. His shoulders had lost their stoop. It was plain that he was glad to go—anxious to get away for a time.

John spoke of this to Lesby and she agreed that Stephen was looking better. It was all he needed—to get away. Every man needed a change ever so often.

"That's so, Lesby. Sometimes I think if I could get down to see Norm—" It was the first time John had spoken of Norm for many moons. He could not continue. The thought of seeing Norm was like believing in fairy-tales; and John had long ago given up his belief in fairy-tales.

A change had indeed come over Stephen. Things no longer seemed difficult. It was all very simple. He had been a fool to let it upset him. It was plain as day to him now that the best thing for him and Anne to do was to go away and send back word. If they stayed and tried to explain things to Lesby, there would be the devil of a mess. Things would be said by all of them—even John, mild as he was would not hesitate to say what he thought, for he loved Lesby. They would say things which they would be ashamed of and they would perhaps live afterward in discord. Things would straighten themselves out better without him and Anne around. They would stay away until things blew over. Then they would come back. Lesby would have to have him help her manage the farm. She would want him. She was a good sport. She would see it sensibly. She would take it as a joke on her and hunch her shoulders and forget it. He and Anne would build that house he had planned. He'd build it on that bit of sloping ground over to the north with the grove at their backs. That would please Anne.

Stephen had not pressed this part of it on Anne. When the honeymoon was over—well, that was time enough to talk of house-plans. But he felt that harvest would see them back at the farm again. Lesby would dispel the awkwardness with one of her hearty laughs and they would be friends as if nothing had happened. He wanted to be friends with Lesby. She seemed a part of his scheme of things. He could not imagine the farm without her—or himself on any other farm without her somewhere around to consult about this or that. . . .

Yes, they would come back. Anne would have the same old cherry thicket and creek and grove that she loved so much. And he would have his steers. It had been the thought of giving up the farm, of not seeing again his white-faced steers and young heifers that had cast a gloom over his days. Relieved now of this depressing thought, Stephen's spirits rose. He longed to be off—to get away with Anne.

Stephen sat staring at his book which lay face downward on his knee. Lesby's heavy tread had reached the top of the stairs. She turned down the hall in the direction of her bedroom and a door closed. In the next room John's bed creaked as he turned over. Stephen could hear the sigh of relief he gave at the closing of Lesby's door; for with Lesby in bed, the day was done and the farm could sleep in safety until morning.

The room seemed very still. There was no sound excepting the jerky ticking of the clock on the shelf behind the stove, and in the pantry a mouse. Outside, one of the young roosters was crowing as if daylight were just over the edge of the world, while the night had barely begun.

The same thought was in each mind as they sat there. Lesby's words as she bade him good night and started up the stairs: "Well, Stephen, this time to-morrow night you'll be goin' to bed without a care in the world, thankin' your stars you don't have to get up at daylight an' start plowin'."

Lying beside Lesby in the dark room, Anne stared in the blackness unable to sleep. To-morrow she would be married to Stephen. She would be Stephen's wife. This time to-morrow she would be lying beside Stephen, not Lesby. It would be Stephen who would be breathing deep and evenly like that, making the covers rise and fall over her. Perhaps the day had come and gone and she was already married. Perhaps this was Stephen lying beside her. The sleeping form at her side was firm and unyielding. The touch did not reassure her, and she lay staring into the darkness, her hands passing down her slim, smooth body that would soon not belong to her.

Sleep refused to come. Every sound inside the house and out seemed to penetrate the

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night with clear, sharp distinctness. She wondered if Stephen had fallen asleep in his room down-stairs. Or was he lying awake as she was, unable to sleep for thinking of to-morrow? . . . She counted sheep. She said the nines forward and back. She went over in her mind the instructions Stephen had given her for the next morning—what she was to do, where she was to meet him, and when. . . . At eight—no later. There must be no mistake, he had told her—no slip-up. They must get off easily and make straight for Toronto, where they would be married before night. He could get a special license. . . . He would start from the farm as soon after breakfast as he could get off—seven-thirty, perhaps. She was to leave the house before that—go by the side door and cut across the east pastures and no one would see her. . . . Wear an every-day dress. . . . Carry no bag. They could buy what she needed when they reached Toronto. Take a hat along. He would have her coat packed in the bottom of his bag and she could put it on when she got in the car. . . . At the side of the road. The right-hand side, where the road turns after it crosses the creek—just the other side of the swamp. She knew the spot. It was near a big butternut tree. First the road passed the swamp—then it made a turn. It had to cross a culvert first—then it made the turn. It was there she had to wait—beyond the swamp and the culvert—near the butternut tree—the car would have to slow down for the turn—Stephen would slow down —open the car door— She knew the spot—about half-way between the farm and Milliken's. . . . No mistake—no slip-up—

She was up at the first streak of daylight. She found Lesby already in the kitchen making the breakfast biscuits, and she passed on to the back steps, where she stood breathing in the fresh morning air. A fog hung over the fields. It would clear. The sun would drive it away.

Down near the barn the car stood ready for the journey, with the trunk strapped to the back. Chuck lay under it tinkering with something. John stood near by, a tired, bent old figure in a faded shawl of Lesby's. There was no sign of Stephen. She stood there, hoping he would appear; but at Lesby's voice she turned and entered the kitchen again.

Lesby had poured her a glass of milk and it stood on the table. As usual, Lesby scolded as she stood watching her drink—sipping it slowly, as she always liked to do.

"Shucks! A good hot cup of coffee would be better for you. I don't see why you don't eat breakfast like a human bein'. Waitin' till noon before you eat anything is all foolishness. No wonder you're pasty as pie-dough. . . . That wouldn't keep a chicken alive," she said as Anne put down the empty glass. "You might as well go over to Milliken's and get them duck eggs." She turned away to peer into the oven at the biscuits. "If I'm ever goin' to get 'em under a hen I'd better be at it."

It was on Anne's lips to say she did not want to go, but Lesby spoke before she could get out the words. She had come to the table and was setting it with quick, vigorous sweeps of her arms.

"You can get back in plenty time to see Stephen before he goes. He ain't leavin' till about eight, and it ain't six yet. You'll find the walkin' cool now. It's goin' to hot up later. . . . Tell Sarah I'll want leb'n. She says nine's a settin'—but I want leb'n."

When Anne came out of the back door again a little later and set out across the field with the empty pail, she saw that old man Snell had driven up to the barn in his dilapidated buckboard and was sitting with a foot on the dashboard talking to John. Inside the barn door Stephen was saddling the bay. Anne knew that he was getting away from old Snell's gossipy tongue, and she knew too that he would ride about the fields and pastures seeing to this and that until Snell took himself off. He refused to listen to any of Snell's "muck," as he called it.

Anne lingered near the first fence, hoping Stephen would see her and wave—or perhaps come to her for a word. But he flung himself into the saddle and rode off without looking back. A feeling of depression weighed on her. She knew why Stephen had ridden away from Snell. The old man's gossip on his journeyings among the farmers during the past year had been mostly of Russ Milliken and his sister-in-law, Minna Loshay; and Stephen refused to listen to it for the same reason that she did not want to go to the Millikens' for the duck eggs. Stephen could see himself in Russ; and she, who had never laid eyes on the woman Minna, felt herself akin to her.

Now that she was on the way to the Milliken farm, she would see Minna. She could tell at a glance whether there was any resemblance between them. Minna would have a guilty look. She was a thief. She had stolen what belonged to some one else—something that belonged to her sister Sarah. . . . She herself had not stolen anything. She had not stolen anything from Lesby. Lesby had never had Stephen's love. It had never been hers. Nor did

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Lesby love Stephen. She could live with any man that she made up her mind to stand. She could have stood Santee. She could have lived with him. Love was nothing but putting up with. Lesby had said all this. Even though she had said it before she had ever seen Stephen, it did not alter the fact that she had believed it—that she was able to believe it.

Anne had heard a good deal about Minna Loshay. Among other things, she had heard that she was soft and kitteny in her ways. Her eyes were baby blue and her hair a sort of palish yellow. She was afraid of the dark and of hogs and cows. She was always jumping from this or that and clutching somebody. Often it was Russ. She was squeamish about getting her hands or her shoes dirty. Once, it was said—by old Snell no doubt—that she had gone up into the hay-loft to gather the eggs; she had screamed and Russ down below had sprung up the loft steps and carried her down in a faint. A setting hen in the hay had nipped her finger. So the tale had run. . . . But she had made a fool of Russ; she had turned his head completely around on his shoulders—according to rumor—so that Russ could no longer see the capable, hard-working, dark-eyed Sarah.

On a high bit of land Anne looked back the way she had come. She could see against the clear sky the new barn roof and the white silo rising above it, and the clump of plane trees that sheltered the house. In the long hollow below her stretched the cherry thicket and the line of willows that followed the creek until it dipped behind the hill. She would not be here when the cherries ripened. She would not be here to eat the wild strawberries in the fence corners. The birds would get them all. They would have a feast. They would fight and scold and stuff themselves and she would not see or hear them. When the maples turned red and orange in the late harvest, she would not be here to see their colors or to hear them rustle in the wind and come whirling down like a flock of brilliant birds. And the creek—the shining creek—

In spite of what Stephen had said, Anne felt she would never come back to the farm again. Lesby would never forgive her for taking Stephen from her. Lesby would forgive Stephen. Women forgave men. But women never forgave women. Sarah would forgive Russ, but she would never forgive Minna. . . . No—once she had gone, she would never see the farm again—nor Lesby nor her father—nor the fields and pastures out there—nor the bronze turkey. That was gone forever. And with him had gone those things which would have kept her from running away with a man promised to another woman. She and Stephen had not the courage to face Lesby with the truth; they were not strong enough to play the game square.

But Stephen was sure they would come back; he was sure that Lesby was too good a sport to hold any hard feelings against them. She would be glad to have them back, he had told her; things would go on at the farm as if nothing had happened.

Anne smiled wryly. That was what Stephen wanted. He wanted things to go on as if nothing had happened. He wanted his white-faced steers, his young heifers, his new silo, his fields and pastures. He wanted Lesby—not as a wife, perhaps, but as another woman. A woman he could go to in time of trouble, for her advice, her help, her experience, her strength. He relied on Lesby. He would always rely on Lesby if he came back. The wry little smile still clung to Anne's face, making her look older than her years.

By the time Anne reached the swamp she wished she had stood out against Lesby and refused to get the duck eggs. A feeling of depression had seized her and she could not shake it off.

There was a dry, safe strip that flanked the road, and here Anne stopped to peer into the dimness of the swamp. The rooks were cawing loudly in the tops of the high trees, warning her to keep out. They seemed to be going all over again the fact that Jeffrey's calf had sunk into one of the bogs two years ago and they hadn't found hair nor hide of it since. . . .

That would be a terrible way to die, she thought as she went on. Yet—after one was dead, it would be over and done with. One would not lie alone and forsaken under the white sheet. Better be Jeffrey's calf in the bottom of the bog. It would only be the going down that would be unpleasant. But one could hold one's nose—

But Stephen loved her. He didn't love Lesby. He would forget the farm and Lesby once he was away. She would learn to cook and keep house. She would keep his clothes mended and his socks darned, and on Sundays they would dress up and go for long drives in the car and see things and talk and come back late at night after the moon was up. Then he wouldn't regret his white-faced steers and his young heifers and the new silo—and he wouldn't miss Lesby.

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XII

Anne approached the Milliken farm from the south pasture. It was here that she came upon Russ's sorrel horse cropping the grass with the harness on his back. If she were Lesby, she thought, she would have caught him and led him back to the barn; but she was afraid of his heels and gave him a wide berth.

At the barn she saw that the buggy had been pulled out of the shed and stood with its shafts on the ground; but Russ was not in sight. A short, stocky man was plowing a strip some distance off. It was not Russ; he was not tall enough for Russ. Inside the barn she called, but no one answered. The place seemed very still. A cow gazed at her over her hay-filled manger. Some baby chicks were running about over the floor and she put down the pail and caught one of the fluffy bunches of gold and cuddled it against her cheek before letting it go again. By the time she came out of the barn the horse had wandered farther afield, and she went up the path in the direction of the house, the duck eggs forgotten in her concern for the horse.

The path led straight away among some plane trees, and as she passed under them she became conscious of a low moaning sound like the deep reverberations of an organ with one note held down. She stood still listening. It seemed to come from nowhere in particular, neither from the trees above her nor from the fields on either side. Yet it was there, pressing close upon her, filling the air with a mournful sigh, now rising, now falling until it almost died away. It was a fearful sound. It made her feel afraid to go on or turn back. It died away —only to come again—this time from the direction of the house, and she was drawn to it by a fascination that she had no power to resist.

The kitchen door stood wide as if it had been flung back and she could see across the low threshold into the room as plainly as if she were within it. A lamp still burned forgotten on the table and its pale gleam mingling with the daylight had laid a ghastly color on the three seated there. Anne's heart stood stock-still and for a moment she could not see. She could only hear Sarah's sobbing—a horrible sound of one who has wept her heart dry—a sound that was no longer the deep note of an organ but a heavy drum beating in her chest, sending her heart throbbing in torment. The air seemed filled with a great, wildly pounding pulse and she turned and ran down the path.

She must have run by the barn and through the pasture gate, for she found herself running across the field where the sorrel horse wandered stepping on his trailing rein. She had many fences to get over—many fields to cross before she would be out of the Milliken farm. But she must keep going. She must get away from Sarah sobbing with her head on her outflung arms, and from Minna with her hat awry and the guilty look in her eyes, and from Russ in his going-away clothes sitting humped over like an old man—an old man— Stephen like an old man—Stephen—

Another fence—another field— She looked back—the house was out of sight now—the top rail of another fence pressed against her and she caught hold of it gasping—trying to get her breath to get over on the other side— But it was easier to let go—to sink down—to press hard against the sweet earth.

Lesby came out of the kitchen to find Stephen's car standing outside the barn with its door wide. Near it, Jerg and Chuck stood scratching their heads. John was limping hastily up the path with a hand at the small of his back and the old shawl trailing behind him.

"Stephen's had a vision," he called out at sight of her.

Lesby went down to meet him. "Don't be a fool! . . . What's up, Jerg?" as Jerg ran up.

"He come back here lookin' like a dead man, askin' if Anne had come back from Milliken's yet. When I told him she hadn't, he lit out on a run acrost the fields in that direction like a crazy man."

"He never stopped to explain the why of nawthin'," put in Chuck, joining them. "He just started on a run toward Milliken's as if there wa'n't a horse or car on the place. He musta thought som'p'n happened to her."

"Shucks! I've known Anne many years now and I've yet to see the time she didn't take all day to go to and from a place, wherever it was."

"But it's queer she hasn't come back, Lesby. And why did Stephen come back lookin' like that if he hadn't had a vision?"

"Don't be a fool, Pa. Only crazy people have visions. I'll knead the bread down and go out to the crick and give a look—see. You, Jerg, go after Stephen. Tell him she's all right. If she ain't down to the crick, she's somewheres between here and Milliken's huntin' wild flowers or som'p'n." Lesby turned back to the house to her bread dough as Jerg set off on a run across the field in the direction Stephen had gone.

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John followed her into the kitchen and sat, a shrunken, distressed heap in the chair by the stove.

"I'm worrit, Lesby. What made Stephen come back lookin' like a dead man if he didn't have a vision?"

"Let up about that vision, Pa. She's dilly-dallyin' between here an' Milliken's. She can find more things to see in a mile o' walkin' than any forty people in the country. Besides —what could've happened to her?"

"I never did like that swamp, Lesby. I wish they'd dreen un off an' fill un up."

"Go 'long. What youse corrishin' up now?" Lesby reproved. "Just som'p'n to get skeered of."

"But Stephen must've felt som'p'n was wrong, Lesby. Else why did he come back white as a dead man an' go huntin' for her?"

Lesby pulled the old shawl in better position about his shoulders. "Best go an' set in the sun awhile; you're shakin' like youse had an ague," she said helping him to his feet. "I'll go out along the crick an' find her as soon as I get the dough made out in loaves. . . . An' don't think up anything more to worry about," she added at the door. "An' if I ain't back in an hour," she called as he set out down the path, "make up the fire an' when it's hot enough set the bread in."

The dough had been divided into six loaves and two dozen rolls and had been put aside to rise, and Lesby was setting an old sun-hat on top of her braids when a whisper reached her ears from the direction of the lean-to.

"Lesby—Lesby——"

"Yas."

Jerg was staring in at her through the screen door. His pale eyes were wide in a face that had become a sickly yellow.

"He's gone crazy—he's plumb loony—he found her hat——"

Lesby flung open the screen door and pulled him in. "Now what's the matter?"

"Mr. MacLaren—he's—runnin' through the swamp—like a crazy man—callin' her— He found her hat—near the swamp——"

"It blowed there when she was goin' to the Millikens'. She never could keep a hat on. Go back an' tell him she ain't in that swamp. Tell him I said so. She knows that swamp—same as them rooks do. She'd be deaf an' blind before she'd get stuck in there. Tell him I said so. Tell him I say to stop actin' like a fool runnin' round in that swamp. He'll get stuck to his chin in that slime." She pushed Jerg with her out of the door. "I'm goin' out to the crick an' the sycamore holler. If she ain't there, she's between here an' Milliken's. Tell Stephen to look for her between here an' Milliken's. She's in some fence corner, huntin' for wild strarbries." She gave him a shove. "An' you stay with him. Don't youse come back here again without un." Her shove had sent Jerg on a stumbling run. He climbed the fence, fell on the other side, picked himself up and ran on.

When John came into the kitchen, he found it empty. He drew his chair closer to the stove. He felt cold and sick. Through the open window he could see the cherry patch and the long line of willows that marked the creek. Beyond, stretched the maple grove. The sun was shining on Lesby as she went. She looked like a strong, young tree striding in amongst her fellow trees. They seemed to reach out their glad arms and take her into their midst, John thought. A feeling of relief and comfort came to him. He sank deeper into his chair and dozed.

Again and again Lesby sent her booming voice ringing through the grove. She had hallooed as she made her way along the creek bank, and through the cherry patch and among the willows. But she had only scared the birds and sent them flying wildly across the fields. At the upper end of the maple grove she turned and came back, still calling.

The sun was half-way down the western sky when at last she came up out of the cherry patch into the open and started across the fields. No smoke curled from the chimney of the distant house. John had forgotten to build up the fire and put the bread in the oven. By this time it had run out over the pans and was spreading over the table—a pretty mess.

There was no sign of Stephen or Jerg in the direction of the Milliken farm. But as she neared the house, Jerg rose up out of the shadow of the smoke-house and came toward her. It was plain that the big fellow had been crying.

"She's—in there"—he jerked a thumb toward the house—"on his bed. We found her —he did it—he found her on the other side the east pasture—in a fence corner——"

Lesby pushed him aside and went on into the house. John was whimpering in his chair by the cold stove. The bread had run over onto the table. The door leading into Stephen's room was closed. John blubbered aloud as she opened it and went in. When she came out again, her eyes were red and her large mouth was unsteady. She went to the bread dough and began working it back into the pans again.

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When she spoke, she tried to keep her voice down and it sounded hoarse in the quiet room.

"Youse wouldn't know she wasn't sleepin'. She was allus pale like. . . . I've saw her look like that dozens of times layin' 'longside me with them little breasts of hers showin' white as milk."

John blubbered aloud again and she left off talking about it and asked where Stephen had gone. A limp motion of his hand went toward the front door, and Lesby passed through the sitting-room wiping her hands on her apron. Stephen was seated on the porch step, and not until she sat down by him and put a hand on his knee did he know she was there and lift his head.

"You mustn't let it get you thisaway, Stephen. She had a tricky heart. It was allus goin' back on her. She must've been runnin'. She never could run, even as a little un—she'd turn blue as a goose."

He nodded and she patted the knee under her hand.

"Youse done all you could, Stephen. If it hadn't been for youse, she'd a laid out there a week mebby an' nobody to find her. Youse done all you could. Even if you'd found her sooner, you couldn't have helped none. She went—like that. It was over in less'n a minute. . . . That's the way she was meant to go—when she was young an' slim as a willer twig. She wasn't meant to suffer with child-bearin' an' get old an' wrinkled like the rest of us—old an' bent. I know. I seen it in her face when she wasn't more'n—so high."

"Don't—for God's sake!"

"Youse mustn't let it get you this way, Stephen."

"Lesby—I came back—because she wasn't at the turn in the road like we'd planned." The words burst from him as if he had been holding them back longer than he could bear. "We was goin' to run off and get married—and send back word to you."

Presently he forced himself to go on. "I wanted to talk to you about it—I tried all winter—but it was no use. I couldn't bring myself to do it." He hurried on, now that it was easier for the words to come, feeling the relief of getting it out of him, of putting some of it over onto her shoulders to help him carry it. He told her all, leaving out nothing—even their attempt to run away the past winter when the snow-storm drove them back—all of it came surging out of him in his desire to unburden himself—the need of her pressing on him—the need of her strength and wide understanding. . . .

"I tried to get up the nerve to talk to you about it—I tried all winter. But it wasn't any use. I couldn't somehow. Then this spring I felt you must have known—that a thing like that couldn't have escaped you—that you must have seen."

"Yes—I saw."

"And you let me go on!"

"I only want what's mine, Stephen."

At that he buried his head in his arms. . . . She seemed to be waiting for something; but when he did not speak, her eyes came back from the fields.

"Did you lay with her, Stephen?"

He lifted his head. "No, I never touched her. . . . I never even kissed her till just a little while ago"—a spasm crossed his face—"in there."

Her hand lingered on his shoulder as she got up. "Come in. You're pasty as pie-dough. I'll hot up the coffee. It'll steady you."

"No—not now." He turned away and went off across the field.

When he came up to the house again, the fragrant smell of boiling coffee and frying ham greeted him as he entered the lean-to. John sat by the kitchen stove pressing the tobacco down into the bowl of his pipe, his face puckered over the task. Lesby stood at the sink chopping something in a bowl. The cows were bawling down at the lane gate. The Holstein had evidently pushed her way in again and let the herd in, for Chuck's bellow of rage rose on the air. Jerg's heavy boots scraped the path. He was coming up for the milk-pails. The sun had set. Its glow was filling the kitchen. It shone on the closed door of his room. Stephen felt his heart contract with sudden pain, and he tilted the pail over the basin and filled it to the brim and doused his face and neck in the cold water, rubbing them vigorously. Lesby stood waiting with a clean towel.

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Behind the Scenes

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS NUMBER

A THRILL ran through the editorial offices when the author of "Lesby" was found to be almost unknown in the writing world. Elizabeth Willis, of Arcadia, California, has written only juveniles up to this time. "I would rather write than do anything else—although I do occasionally get out and dig devil grass out of the zinnia beds to keep down my waist-line." Mrs. Willis, born in Kansas, "trekked from the Rockies to the Everglades and from Cape Cod to the Pacific" to find this Arcadia peaceful enough to let her do a little thinking—and writing.

The Rt. Hon. Winston Churchill, English statesman, has had a long and distinguished career in the army and in politics. Entering the army when he was 21, he saw much active service in wars from Cuba to Khartoum; held a lieutenancy in the Queen's Own Hussars; was a lieutenant-colonel in France during the World War, from which he retired to become Minister of Munitions; later became Secretary of State for War, for Air, for the Colonies. Charles Scribner's Sons will issue next spring a one-volume edition of Churchill's famous "The World Crisis," originally in four volumes. In October they published his new book, "A Roving Commission: My Early Life," an incomparable picture of the shaping of a man.

Katharine Newlin Burt's latest short story in SCRIBNER'S was "Herself," which elicited some of the highest praise from readers as well as some of the most outraged disapproval. The story appears in the 1930 O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories, published last month. Struthers Burt and Mrs. Burt are on their large ranch in Wyoming, the Bar BC.

Max Eastman, scholar, prophet, critic, once more smiles broadly and takes up his cudgels to do battle. His fields of interest are many. After college he was for four years a member of the faculty of psychology and philosophy at Columbia University. During the war he edited *The Masses,* and later, when his vague ideal had been named Communism, *The Liberator*. He translated Trotsky and Pushkin and wrote his own book on Trotsky. The important "Marx and Lenin, the Science of Revolution" was the result of several years spent in Russia. "The Enjoyment of Poetry" ranked as a classic of criticism soon after its publication. He has made recognized contributions to psychology, chiefly in his book "The Sense of Humor." Mr. Eastman is a popular lecturer. He is at work on a new book.

Virgilia Peterson Ross says, "I do not think that my age, 26, is interesting, as I am far older than the 'bright young people' we hear so much from and not old enough to know anything." (We could do with more authors of this age!) Mrs. Ross was born in New York but received her education abroad. She reviews books for the New York *Herald Tribune* and writes "personality articles" for magazines. Mrs. Ross's father, Doctor Frederick Peterson, has contributed to the Magazine, and "Hymn to the Sun" by Malcolm Ross, her husband, was published this year by the House of Scribner.

"John Deth and Other Poems," published in September, is the first to be heard from Conrad Aiken since his selection for the Pulitzer award for poetry in 1929. His announced novel has once more been postponed because Mr. Aiken much prefers to write poetry, a volume of which he is now preparing.

Sherwood Anderson declares that "as regards human relationships, I am as muddle-headed a man as ever lived," but if that is so, it is the muddle-headed who can see beyond and within, who will pound us into awareness of our spiritual dangers in this decade. In this issue Mrs. Fletcher shows one result of Big Business on the family, Professor France offers an economic solution for some of the social problems it has created, and Sherwood Anderson discovers what is happening to men's souls.

Grace Nies Fletcher, of Boston, lives in Detroit with her husband. She lived in New York for several years, and spent some time in England study-

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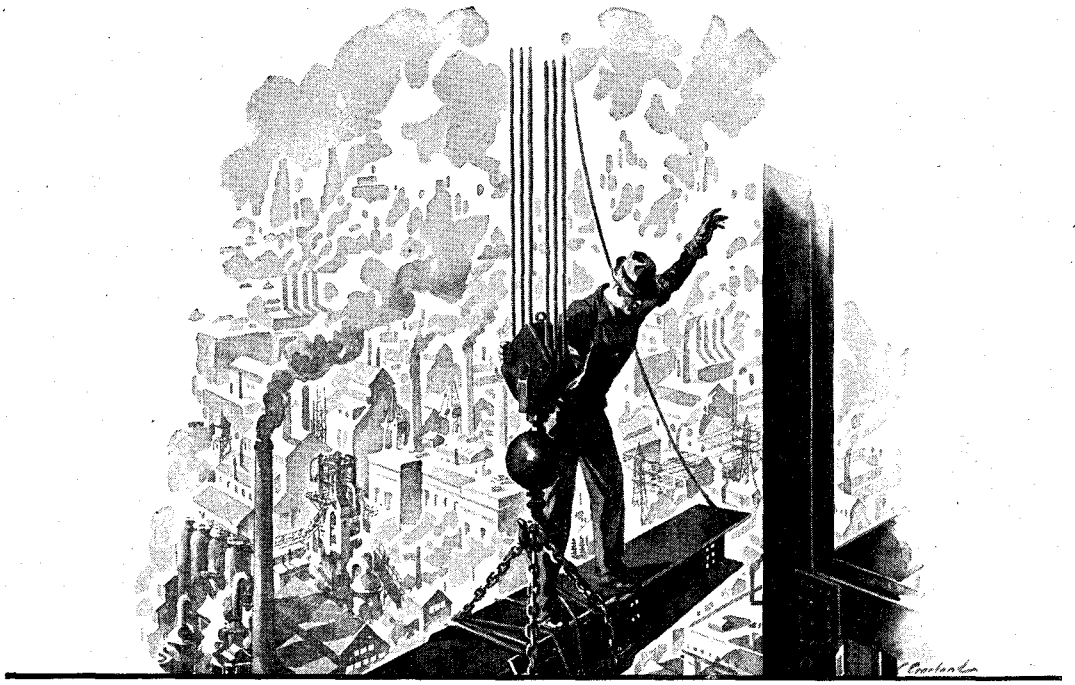

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ing the problem of education for women. Her articles have appeared in *Century, World's Work, Ladies' Home Journal,* and *McCall's.*

Alfred Kreymborg long and vigorously upheld the cause of free verse, editing anthologies of it as well as using that form for much of his own work. He is a native New Yorker. He is now in England, lecturing at Oxford University.

Royal Wilbur France, son of a Presbyterian minister belonging to an old Maryland family, spent his boyhood in New York State. After completion of his law course, he was admitted to the bar, practising law in New York City as a member of various firms at intervals from 1906 till 1919. Professor France was legal adviser to the Quartermaster General of the United States during the World War. His business experience includes the managership of a large film company for three years and presidency of Salt's Textile Co., "a large velvet and plush company with two mills in this country, one in England and two in France, and in this capacity gave close study to the problems both of domestic and international business." Later, wishing to give his time to the theoretical questions of economics and to teaching, he became professor of economics in Rollins College in 1929.

John Metcalfe, a Yorkshire Englishman, is still an officer in the Royal Air Force Reserve after service during the war in the air force. He attended the University of London. His stories appeared in important English periodicals and later were collected under the title "The Smoking Leg." "Arm's Length," his second novel, was well received when it was published last spring.

John Thomas Stewart, 37-year-old minister of the First Congregational Church in Bonne Terre, Missouri, confesses to "a most irregular education: district school, small high school, two years in college, and theology at Harvard." After holding innumerable jobs as a youngster and later, he began to preach in 1918. "A grand time to be in the church if you can stand the gaff. My wife and I have had babies nearly everywhere: our first in Illinois, second in Missouri, third in Illinois, fourth and fifth in Massachusetts. Trying to support a family of seven on $125.00 a month taught me something. Wrote a million, five hundred thousand words on my portable before I made the first sale—2,700 words to SCRIBNER'S" ("And the Poor Have (Not) the Gospel"—September, 1929).

Robert Hazard is the fellow who, filled with literary ambitions, starved in vain in Greenwich Village, finally moved to the Bronx, took to driving a taxi, and crashed the literary gates in a big way with his hacking reminiscences. "Hacking New York" appeared in book form after it ran in SCRIBNER'S MAGAZINE, and another book is now in preparation.

What You Think About It

THE $5,000 prize contest for long short stories closed on September 20 with 1,672 manuscripts entered. Because we have been reading them as rapidly as they have come in—up until the last few months when the real rush started—we can say that the response to the contest has been astonishing, both in numbers and in the quality of the manuscripts submitted. Of the stories already purchased and from which the prize winner will be selected, two stories—"Many Thousands Gone," by John Peale Bishop, and "One Way of Love," by Grace Flandrau—have been written by Americans living in France. James Gould Cozzens, author of "S. S. San Pedro," lives in New York City. W. R. Burnett, author of "Hard Wood," is an Ohioan now living in California. "Lesby," which appears in this issue, is the work of Elizabeth Willis, of Arcadia, California, a writer hitherto unknown.

The object of the contest was twofold: first, to give an opportunity for established writers to function in the field of the long short story, which has long been dormant by reason of technical barriers (too long for a short story, too short for a serial, or a novel, etc.); and, second, to uncover promising new talent. It is a source of satisfaction to SCRIBNER'S that both objects have been attained.

Reading of all manuscripts is going forward rapidly. Announcement of the prize winner will be made as soon as all possible selections can be placed in the hands of the judges and a decision reached.

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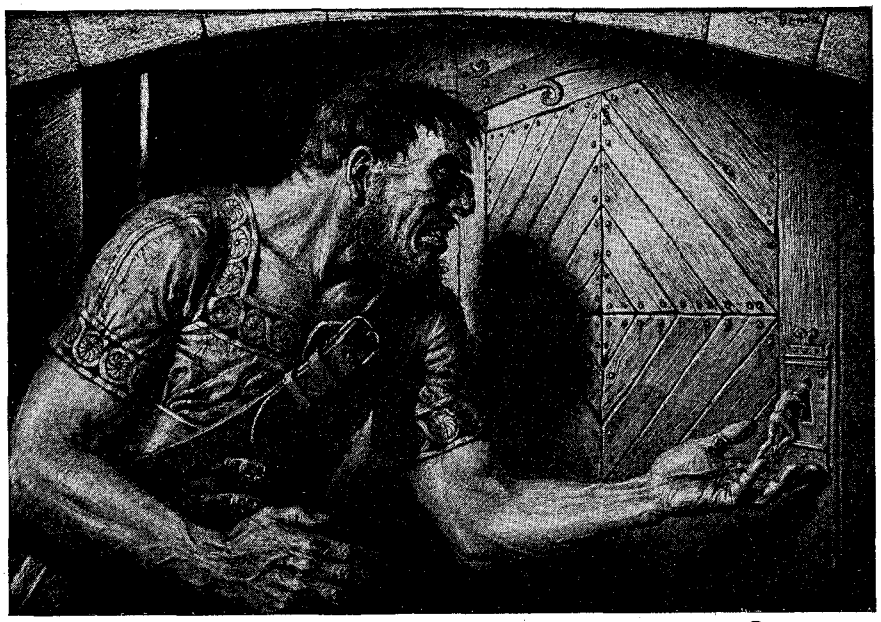
The Giant and the Pygmy



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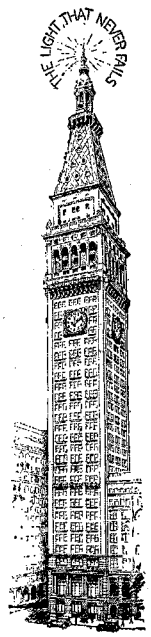
EITHER from your own personal experience or from observation you know how miserable one can feel when suffering from a cold.

Of course you know some of the causes—chilling drafts, wet feet, over-fatigue, balky digestion, or an invading germ. You know it is harder to fight a cold when you are run-down. Keep yourself fit.

For the sake of your own personal comfort you want to get rid of a cold in the shortest possible time. For your own personal safety and that of your friends you *ought* to get rid of a cold in the shortest possible time.

There are many different kinds of colds—hard to distinguish one from the other. All of them are threats and one leads to another.

The original cold, if not promptly cured, breaks down resistance and is sometimes followed by a second cold more stubborn and oftentimes more treacherous than the first. The mucous membrane of the nose and throat is so weakened by Cold No. 1 that the way is opened for dangerous germs to enter.



Cold No. 1 is the Pygmy that crawls through the keyhole and unlocks the door for Cold No. 2, the Giant. In fact, to carry the picture further, the Pygmy Cold, which may be nothing worse than snuffles, a slight cough, a bit of an ache or a pain, may be followed by any one of several Giant Colds—influenza, pneumonia or tuberculosis.

Take no chances the next time that symptoms of catching a cold are shown by you or someone in your family. Consult your doctor and dispose of the Pygmy quickly, before he can open the door for the Giant. At such a time a skilful doctor is your best ally and you will be wise in following faithfully his orders.

Metropolitan Life Insurance Company will be glad to mail free, its booklet, "Just a Cold? Or"—to anyone who requests it. Address Booklet Department 1230-S.

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(Continued from page 86)

MR. MICHELSON

The uproar over Frank R. Kent's article on Charley Michelson, Democratic National Publicity Director, shows no signs of abating. It has been made an issue in the Congressional campaigns, and has been the subject of many articles, speeches and radio addresses. Much has been made of the charge that Mr. Michelson is being paid $25,000 a year to "smear" President Hoover. In rebuttal, the Democrats contend that nothing is being done which has not always been done by Republican publicity directors against Democratic Presidents and point to the campaign of vilification against President Wilson. The Baltimore *Sun* interviewed Senator Fess, Republican National Chairman, as follows:

It was suggested to Senator Fess that the Republican committee had an extensive press bureau operated, according to report, by high-salaried men who were presumably paid by contributions from rich men. Senator Fess smiled and only said: "You newspaper men ought to know what kind of questions to ask me."

Mr. Michelson made a radio address of which this is a newspaper quotation:

Mr. Michelson insists that the attacks have been on President Hoover's Administration and not on the President personally. The only personal attacks on the President, he points out, were those made when Mr. Hoover was food administrator and those came from such Republicans as Senator Fess, now chairman of the Republican National Committee; Representative Wood, now chairman of the Republican Congressional Committee, and others high in Republican councils.

RUSSIA'S CHALLENGE

John Carter's article on Russia's challenge to American business came at a time when the country was excited about the Soviet Republic selling wheat "short" on the Chicago Board of Trade. Mr. Carter's succinct statement of Russia's plans and her possible later competition to the same American industries which are now helping her to get established industrially, made a profound impression. The Baltimore *Sun* called it "the best statement of the Russian problem yet seen."

"ONE WAY OF LOVE"

Interest continued high in the readers' contest with Mrs. Flandrau's "One Way of Love." Again criticisms of the highest type came from all parts of the country. The excellence of the story stirred several readers to thank the Magazine for offering a hearing to stories of the longer type, which seemed the inevitable length for "One Way of Love." The names of the winners and the announcement of the next contest based on "Lesby" by Elizabeth Willis are contained in the contest page among the front advertising pages.

A remarkable piece of writing. . . . For this is not a story of Walcott but a story about you and me and about every man who has ever lived or is likely to live for millenniums to come.—JOHN M. RHAME, Bishopville, S. C.

A *sugar-coated* informative narration which is written in a superb style, making it an admirable piece of work. . . . One criticism . . . The title doesn't fit.—N. IRENE EDDY, 223 Brown St., Providence, R. I.

Mrs. Flandrau's portrayal of character is her strongest point. . . . Plot is almost lacking in this story.—HELEN M. KING, 21 Brenton St, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

There is throughout a beauty and greatness that makes one label it as one of the outstanding productions of the year.—MISS TERRELL TATUM, 408 E. Fifth St., Chattanooga, Tenn.

The truth of this story consists in the reactions, motives, struggles and frustrations of such a character (Walcott). . . . We are convinced of their truth.—ISRAEL NEWMAN, Augusta, Maine.

One wants to cry out "Don't" to the author when the innermost thoughts of this man are revealed. . . . The reader recognizes his own traits. If this one characterization were the only good point, the story would still be a modern classic.—K. EVANS HOUSTON, P. O. Box 545, Houston, Texas.

Seldom since James and Meredith has an author led us more ably in exploring the mind, a journey that stretches —for Walcott—toward madness and death.—ERNEST DEXTER, 1041 S. Second St., San Jose, Calif.

The author has managed her material skilfully. . . . Walcott's wife, the absent character, might have played a more decisive part.—JOHN STEPHAN, 801 DeMan Ave., St. Louis, Mo.

The depth of theme, in beauty of description, in intensity of atmosphere, all united to support a powerful study of character. "One Way of Love" is a challenge to writers of the long story.—FLORENCE WYMAN, Mayfield, Kentucky.

One's first business in writing is quite obviously to present life in terms of realism—in other words, to say what one has to say simply and effectively, to describe characters faithfully and express situations forcefully. Mrs. Flandrau does exactly that.—RALPH E. CONDER, Milestone Farm, Southboro, Mass.

"One Way of Love" is the probing of a human soul, which is the end of all literature. . . . The setting of the jungle, picturesque though it is, is merely scenery. The struggle in Walcott's soul would have been as breaking, if he had been living quietly at home. . . . Read this little masterpiece and you will take a more tolerant view of human nature.—FRANCES M. ABBOTT, 35 Pleasant St., Concord, N. H.

Gripping and intensely interesting. . . . Yet the theme is not what one might call pleasant. It is bitter-sweet.—H. BUNKEE WRIGHT, Hinman House, Evanston, Ill.

(Continued on page 90)

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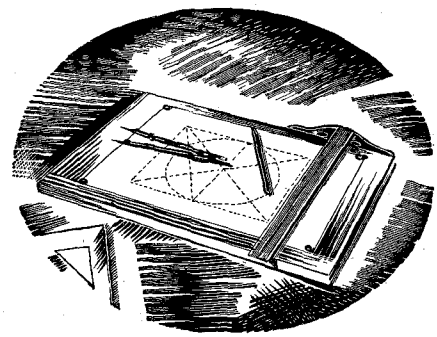

On the Necessity for
DYNAMIC SYMMETRY IN HOUSEKEEPING

We almost feel like Einstein. For we have discovered a new theory . . . that dynamic symmetry is applicable not only to drawing and architecture, but to the art of housekeeping, too!

See if you don't agree. Dynamic symmetry, when you get to the roots of its root rectangles, is just a matter of keeping things in proportion—of giving the proper emphasis to everything. And what is more important than that in managing a home?

Take, for example, your choice of laundry soap. It may seem like a trivial housekeeping detail. But is it? The way your clothes are washed is highly important—and soaps differ widely in the way they wash clothes.

Fels-Naptha gives *extra* help. By this we mean that it washes clothes completely and sweetly clean, with a minimum of wear on the clothes and on your laundress.

For Fels-Naptha is more than it appears to be at first glance. The big golden bar is two cleaners in one—unusually good soap and *plenty* of dirt-loosening naptha. You can smell the naptha. Working together, these two cleaners remove dirt gently, firmly and thoroughly—without hard rubbing. Fels-Naptha works with a will in washing machine or tub; and in any temperature of water from hot to cool. And it helps to keep hands nice.

Maybe you'll pay a penny or so more per bar for Fels-Naptha. But when you've seen the way it washes clothes, your sense of values will tell you that its *extra* help more than outweighs the trifling extra cost. See that it goes on tomorrow's grocery order.

SPECIAL OFFER—Whether Fels-Naptha has been used in your home for years, or whether you have just decided to give it a trial, we'll be glad to send you a Fels-Naptha Chipper. Many women who do their own housework prefer to chip Fels-Naptha into washing machine, tub or basin, and find the chipper handier than using a knife. With it, and a bar of Fels-Naptha, anyone can make fresh, golden soap chips (that contain plenty of naptha!) just as they are needed. Mail coupon with four cents in stamps enclosed to help cover postage, and we'll send a Fels-Naptha sample with this chipper without further cost. Here's the coupon—mail it now!

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Is He a Drawing Room Sphinx?

WATCH YOUR HUSBAND

Conversation is a lost art with many a man, unless the talk turns to business. No wonder many a wife becomes discontented when she reflects that, in a social way, her successful husband is a complete failure!

A winter cruise via *Red Star* or *White Star Line* broadens such men, makes them more interesting to themselves and others.

MEDITERRANEAN—*Britannic* (new), Jan. 8, 46 days. *Homeric*, Jan. 24, *White Star Line* with Thos. Cook & Sons, 45–57 days.

WEST INDIES—12 to 19 days. *Britannic* (*White Star Line* with Thos. Cook & Sons), and *Lapland. Only cruises to visit Mexico.*

WORLD CRUISE of the *Belgenland*, from New York, Dec. 15; San Diego, Dec. 31; Los Angeles, Jan. 2; San Francisco, Jan. 4. *Red Star Line* in co-operation with American Express Co. 133 days.

Write for booklet, "Watch Your Husband," to Desk N, I. M. M. Co., No. 1 Broadway, New York.

30 Principal Offices in the United States and Canada. Authorized Agents everywhere.

WHITE STAR LINE
RED STAR LINE
International Mercantile Marine Company

WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT IT

(Continued from page 88)

The author is cruel to send this poor fellow to the jungles of Africa. He should have been sent to a psychopathic hospital instead. He might have become a useful citizen. Particularly so, if he could have been separated from the driving and nagging of his wife.—JOHN F. GILL, M.D., Abilene State Hospital, Abilene, Tex.

I find no flaw in the story. It is a beautiful and touching picture of a human soul striving to conquer the evil within himself.—ANNA O. COOPER, Trade, Ala.

A powerful character analyst, the author has written a story worthy to live in American fiction.—ETHEL A. DICKIE, State Hospital, Mendota, Wis.

"One Way of Love" is so near perfection as erring mortals may hope to get.—G. D. MACKAY, Caledonia, N. Y.

The excellence of the writer's craftsmanship is unquestionable. But when one takes into account the enormous number of introspective, subjective novels and stories, about self-centred and sexually weak neurotics, "One Way of Love" doesn't stand out very conspicuously. It is a distinguished performance with a disagreeable and—what is worse—hackneyed and trivial theme.—A. L. HUME, Apartado No. 106, Tampico, Mexico.

There is nothing that either of them does that has not been done many thousand times by others. The whole story hinges on an insignificant thing like "quinine." And yet it is not such an insignificant thing. It has life saving qualities in it; also heroic qualities. The heroic qualities made Walcott a real hero and this story worthy of a place among the best in this series of SCRIBNER'S.—T. G. LANCE, Young Harris, Ga.

May have interest for some, but to our mind it seemed inadequate and unoriginal. In fact it was boring.—FRANCES M. WEBSTER, 1921 Kalorama Road, Washington, D. C.

Absorbing, fascinating, gripping; it is a fine story, and more; it is a great story.—MRS. T. G. PRESCOTT, 37 Holly St., Phœnix, Arizona.

Mrs. Flandrau strains our credulity when she asks us to believe that any one would go to the Congo swamps for his health, but with this exception the tale is clean cut and credible. . . . Her descriptions of the jungle are given with a Conradian touch.—JAMES SIMPSON, 804 Summit Ave., Seattle, Washington.

A strong story . . . an unusual story built about a weak man: a story that could be read with advantage by every one of us, yes—and re-read, reflecting as it does, our own lives, in our weak moments.—MAE HOUGHTON SMITH, 4517 N. 42nd St., Omaha, Nebraska.

I hardly feel pity when he dies. He has never lived. The story is powerful but not very satisfying.—MRS. M. F. LANGHORNE, Smithfield, Virginia.

It starts with the promise of something good in the way of picturing a human drama, it holds something of that interest all the way through, and yet it falls short of living up to its promise.—HARRY F. COLEMAN, 813 New Orleans Bank Bldg., New Orleans, La.

With much mental lip-smacking, I settled myself for a period of purest enjoyment. . . . When I reached the last

(Continued on page 92)

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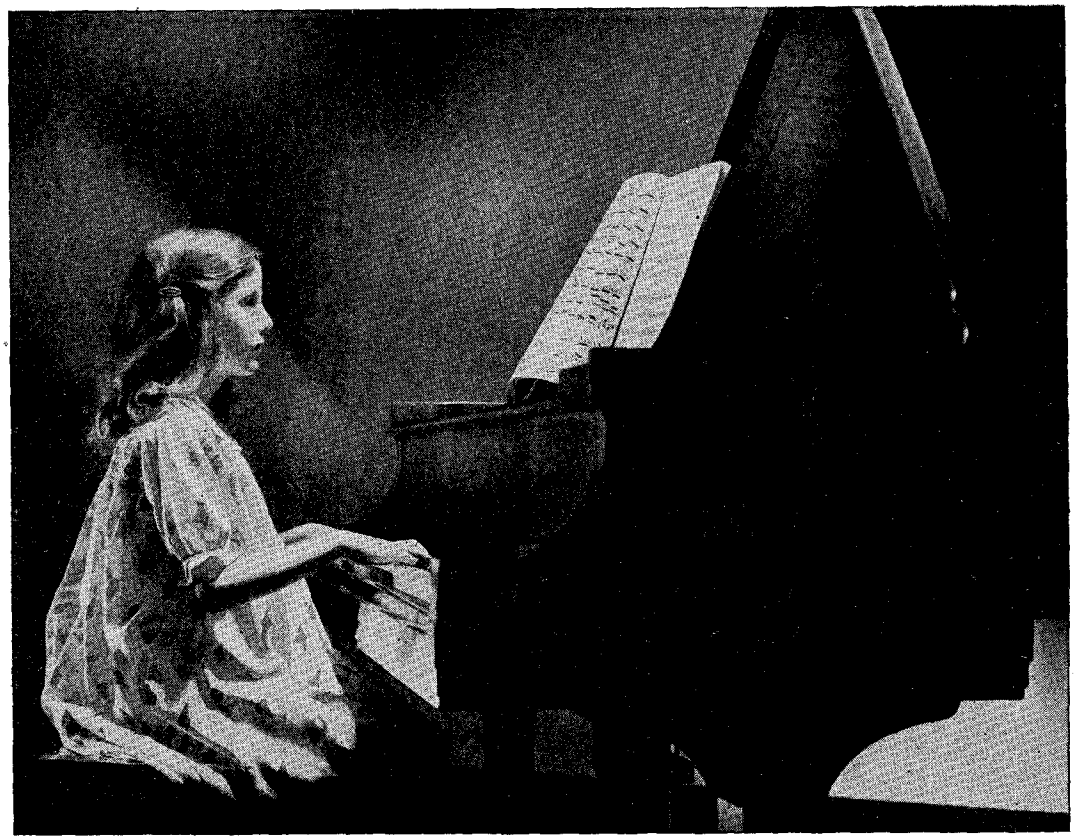

Study of Child at the Piano by Anton Bruehl

BEYOND THE DOLL HOUSE

TUMBLING gaily over a pile of golden sand . . . bobbing wee blond heads above the absurd mane of some dappled hobby horse . . . hurling diminutive bodies valiantly into battle against wash-rags and "sleepy-bye" . . . our babies are pretty much what nature and heredity made them.

But all too soon the shouting, dreaming, reckless little-things draw near the time when environment commences to play the major part. Then begin the habits of thought and feeling by which, justly or unjustly, people are bound to judge them. And here their fates are more than ever in our hands. For it is we who must choose and furnish the particular world that inevitably lies beyond their sand-piles and their dolls.

Informed parents, faced with this problem, seldom fail to select, as an initial item of cultural equipment, an introduction to the most personal of all the arts, music. . . . And this for generations, in both Europe and America, has meant instruction on the Steinway.

The Steinway stands as the chosen instrument of nearly every great musician from Liszt to Paderewski. A creation of fine craftsmanship in polished woods and ivory, its mere presence serves to connect your children with the glorious part this Instrument of the Immortals has played in the history of art. It is so ruggedly constructed that it will serve two or three generations of children . . . permitting their young talents to develop without risk of the distortive influences lurking in practice on inferior instruments . . . fostering a colorful accomplishment that will help them to make friends.

Source of entertaining melody . . . medium of genius . . . the incomparable Steinway nevertheless is sold on terms that place it at the disposal of even the modest incomes.

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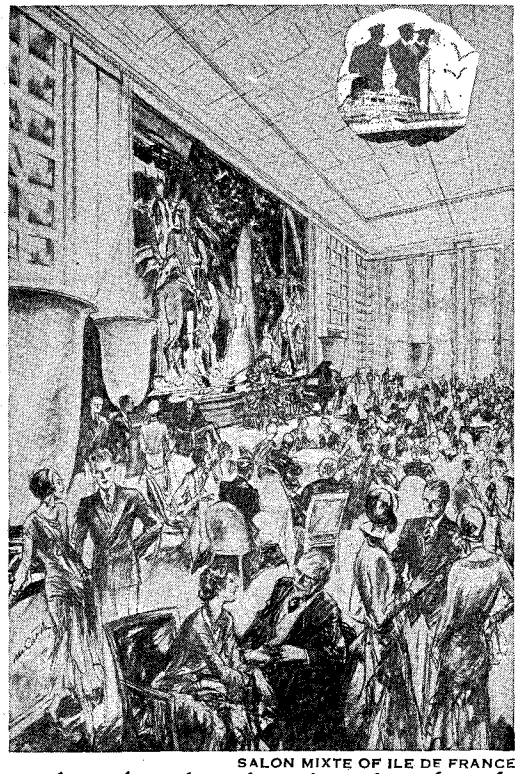

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French Line

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WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT IT

(Continued from page 90)

words, a feeling of bewilderment persisted. Had I read a story, a narrative, a short novel and had I been simply too stupid to know it? . . .Why must "realism" always be ugly and disgusting?—ELIZABETH WILLIAMS COSGROVE, 1011 Terrace Blvd., Muskogee, Okla.

I venture to guess that you have not received one better than this.—FAYE COSHATT LEWIS, 1726 Wilson Ave., Webster City, Ia.

Powerful and, on the whole, a well written story.—PHILIP NORRIS, Rutherfordton, N. C.

The style of writing is modern and refined at the same time, the characters live, as do the very words and sentences of the author, and one is satisfied with the admirable climax achieved. . . . One is loath to imagine just what the tale might have become if you had not opened your pages to this very important form of writing. —WILLIAM SADOYAN, 348 Carl St., San Francisco, Calif.

Excellent. . . . Quite worthy of the prize.—ALICE EZELL, Sidon, Miss.

Walcott's is as tragic a death as Mercutio's, that lovely young man with the beautiful mind in "Romeo and Juliet."—MRS. BELO STONE, 1605 Laurel Ave., Knoxville, Tenn.

He is the tragic victim of the menacing national disease which has poisoned the American mind and destroyed the serenity of American life. That disease is Success.—M. ALICE CARLSON, Fernhurst, Honolulu, T. H.

The further we delve into the psychological depths of this marvellous portrayal of character, the more intense our interest becomes. The author has treated her theme with the powerful strokes of a great artist. A masterpiece is produced, the work of a master-craftsman.—THORNBURN D. BLACK, 35 Monticello Ave., Piedmont, Calif.

The paragraphs relating to Walcott's wife and her letters could have been omitted. . . . An apparent weakness.—GEORGE ROSEN, 790 Broad St., Newark, N. J.

If Mrs. Flandrau had not been a fairly well-known author, and they always have the precedence in a contest over unknown authors, I do not think that her story would have been placed in the contest.—MARIE A. SOLANO, 176 Maple Road, Brookline, Mass.

In this character we see ourselves. . . . If there is a weakness in the presentation, I am not critic enough to detect it.—MRS. MERRILL BERNARD, Crowley, La.

A strong, absorbing story of conflict.—MRS. NELL E. MCMASTER, Winnsboro, S. C.

It has been ten days since I read it. . . . In those ten days the story has come back to me time and time again, peculiarly fascinating, each time its tense background and characters seeming richer and more powerful.—BAIRD MIDDAUGH, 1416 East Walnut St., Des Moines, Ia.

I am somewhat puzzled as to the meaning behind the title. "One Way of Love"—whose love? What love? What way?—STUART HASTINGS, 44 School St., Oyster Bay, N. Y.

A flawless masterpiece.—CATHERINE VAN DYKE, 1301 New York Ave., Cape May, N. J.

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Only a greatly enlarged Cadillac manufacturing program, together with General Motors unequalled resources, makes possible the new La Salle Eight—with its new and more powerful engine, its provisions for safety and driving ease, its magnificent Fisher and Fleetwood bodies—at so low a price as $2195, f. o. b. Detroit

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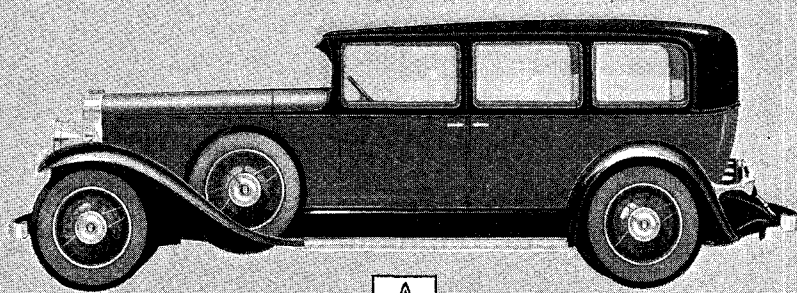

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The yield of common stocks is low even after the decrease of market prices. Why?

Where Dividends Will Come From

BY S. PALMER HARMAN

THE terrific hammering which was administered to the stock market in September and October drove high grade stocks down to a point where they could be bought at prices 40 to 50 per cent cheaper than a year ago. Many of the stronger companies, whose securities slumped with the rest, not only are maintaining their old dividend rates but have proved their ability to earn enough to pay those dividends, in spite of hard times. To investors who have been waiting for such a situation before buying, Wall Street ought to look like a thrifty shoppers' paradise, according to all the old rules.

But the investor who tries to make a selection of good stocks soon discovers some surprising facts. In spite of the drop in prices, the income yield obtainable from the 90 stocks included in the index of the Standard Statistics Company at the beginning of October was only 4.72 per cent. On the same date a selection of 20 high grade preferred stocks, whose dividends take priority over common stock payments, offered a return of 5.46 per cent, or nearly one-sixth more than the common stocks, while from a group of industrial bonds, ranking ahead of both preferred and common stocks, it was possible to get an average of 4.83 per cent—again a better return than that afforded by the common stocks. Later calculations may alter these relative positions, but hardly to an important degree.

Are common stocks "cheap," after all? Will they pay the larger dividends which their present price indicates are expected? Some Wall Street professionals, in a moment of inspiration during the gloomy days when prices were sinking lower and lower, suggested that rock bottom would not be touched until the yield from common stocks was higher than that from bonds, to compensate for the greater uncertainty of payment, and that all idea of increased dividends and rising values had better be dismissed from the investor's calculations. This point of view is interesting mainly because of the reversal of ideas it indicates since the summer of 1929, when buyers were told to ignore current yields and contemplate future values.

It may throw some light on the matter to compare present yields with those which occurred during other periods of panic and depression. The Cleveland Trust Company's business bulletin states that the yield from "all dividend paying common stocks" in the panic of 1903 reached its highest monthly average at 5.5 per cent. In the crisis of 1907 it was 7.5 per cent. When the outbreak of the World War brought financial chaos and the stock exchanges had to be closed, the highest average yield level was 6.5 per cent. A great smash occurred in 1917, after the United States entered the war, and stock yields rose to 9.2 per cent. In the deflation panic of 1921 the highest yield was 8.9 per cent. The average for last September is placed at 5.7 per cent.

Compared with most of these depression-year income yields, the present income return looks low. It seems to give some point to the question whether common stocks have even yet become as cheap as they ought to be. But on the face of the figures given above it is evident that many qualifications will have to be made. Stocks now yield a better return—that is, they are relatively lower in price—than in the panic of 27 years ago, when the whole business structure was far less powerful than it is to-day. The outbreak of the war in 1914 paralyzed the markets of the whole world, yet judging by the above compilation American stocks fell less on that occasion than during the panic of 1907, less than when we ourselves declared war, and less than in 1921.

It seems fair to conclude that the yields obtainable from common stocks in other years constitute only the roughest and most tentative sort of standard by which to measure present yields. The results are irregular and inconsistent. It seems more profitable to ask why, after a year of drastic liquidation, the income returns obtainable from representative common stocks are still below those paid by selected groups of preferred stocks and bonds, with their prior claims on earnings and assets.

There can be only one answer to that question. It is that the public, even after most of its hallucinations of last year have been swept away, still be-

(Continued on page 96)

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CAPITAL, SURPLUS AND UNDIVIDED PROFITS MORE THAN $295,000,000

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(Continued from page 94)

lieves that common stocks will pay more than bonds or preferred stocks. It prefers the uncertain but unlimited common stock yield to the protected but restricted return from securities having a prior claim on earnings.

This is all very well as a way of backing one's "faith in America," but it really has a more solid basis than that. A brief excursion into corporation income statements will show what this basis is. Except in years of pronounced depression, our business enterprises habitually retain a part of their earnings and add it to surplus, instead of paying it out as dividends. The proportion between the part kept and the part paid out varies from year to year and between one industry and another, but a rough normal average would be 65 cents to dividends and 35 cents to surplus out of each dollar of net earnings.

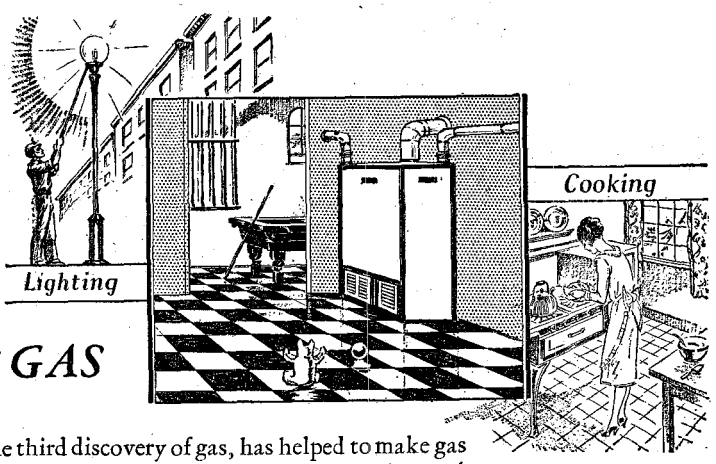
These additions to surplus are, or should be, additions to earning power. They are not kept wholly in the form of cash and hence are not available for paying out as dividends, but are used for the purchase of new equipment, the building of new plants, and other forms of investment. The idea of expansion permeates the surplus account. All replacements of worn out or obsolete equipment, designed merely to keep the business from falling back, are "written off" or placed in reserve accounts before surplus is figured.

It is obvious that, with a normal flow of prosperity from year to year, the surplus becomes cumulative, roughly resembling the accretions of compound interest. A business which earns 10 per cent on its capital and sets aside $1,000,000 to surplus in one year, may in the next year expect to add not $1,000,000 but $1,100,000, and so on increasingly. These additions, actually additions to capital, are the property of the common stockholders. Instead of demanding them in the form of current dividends, the stockholders have acquiesced in the policy of reinvesting them—"plowing back earnings," in Wall Street's phrase—thereby following the example of Patience in the Interpreter's house, who was "willing to wait" for his best things.

In the light of this procedure, the price of common stocks at any given time is seen to represent, not only an estimate of the general level of prosperity in the near future, but an attempt to capitalize the cumulative earnings of corporations. How far ahead the average investor looks in deciding what income will satisfy him, is something that no one can even estimate. Usually it is not a matter of conscious calculation. Yields are established by the give and take of the market place

(Continued on page 98)

The THIRD DISCOVERY of GAS



HEATING, the third discovery of gas, has helped to make gas production during the last ten years greater than the total produced during all the previous 110 years of the industry.

House heating by gas holds an especially bright future. Although less than one-half of 1% of Associated System gas customers use gas for house heating, yet their consumption was 7% of the total sales in 1929. Homes heated by gas supplied by the Associated System are increasing at the rate of 33% a year.

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An airplane tour of the communities served by the operating properties of the American Water Works and Electric Company, Incorporated

Hagerstown is one of the progressive trade centers of western Maryland. Its products cover a wide range, from automobiles, machinery and steam engines to lumber, spokes, flour, silk and matches. The population of 36,000 is growing and the territory surrounding Hagerstown is a beautiful and fertile farming region.

THE POTOMAC EDISON COMPANY and its subsidiaries supply electric light and power, and other services to Hagerstown and other communities throughout practically all of western Maryland, making possible the development of industry in smaller communities where living conditions are ideal.

The securities of this progressive utility unit are backed by a steadily growing domestic and industrial demand from a typical cross-section of our national life—a demand which is also reflected in the revenues and security values of American Water Works and Electric Company, the parent enterprise.

Send for booklets descriptive of the business and securities of our electric and water companies

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(Continued from page 96)

and are influenced by many incalculable factors. But at bottom, the price of a stock at any moment represents an approximation of the "present value" of an income to be received over a period of years, both the amount of the income and the period of payment being very much in the region of the relative. At this writing, as we have seen, this present value is placed at a figure which produces a smaller immediate income than do fixed-dividend securities.

It may be objected that all this is rather theoretical and that a practical illustration of how it works out would be in order. The United States Steel Corporation will provide an example. In 26 of its 29 years of existence the corporation has earned more than it paid out in dividends. In 1929 dividend payments amounted to approximately $89,000,000 and surplus after dividends, earned in that year, was $108,500,000. Surplus earned in previous years and unappropriated to specific purposes, plus various adjustments and miscellaneous items of income, brought the so-called total surplus up to $588,600,000 at the end of 1929.

But in addition to this stated total there have been heavy annual appropriations, chiefly of money set aside and used for new construction. A rough calculation indicates that the total of these appropriations since the company was established in 1901 is in the neighborhood of $800,000,000. For practical purposes, and as additions to earning power, these appropriations are as truly surplus as the smaller bookkeeping figure assigned to that item in the corporation's reports.

If the owner of United States Steel common stock has fared reasonably well with the passing of years, it is fair to attribute a substantial part of his good fortune to the building up of earning power through reinvested earnings. I shall not attempt to calculate just how things have worked out for the man who bought Steel common 25 years ago. It is interesting to record the fact, however, that the same common stock which was selling for more than $260 a share in 1929 and which is now selling in the neighborhood of $150, could be bought in 1904 for $8.37½. And I hasten to say that I don't believe that Steel common will increase in price another 3,000 per cent in the next 25 years, in spite of cumulative earning power.

The amount of earnings which a corporation's surplus can produce naturally has a great deal to do with the dividends paid on the stock. How to put the surplus to work is often a difficult problem. Unless larger dividends are paid in prosperous years, the company finds itself with substantially larger working capital on hand, just as though new securities had been sold to the public and the proceeds put into the treasury. It is up to

(Continued on page 100)

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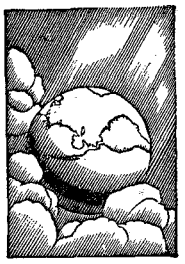

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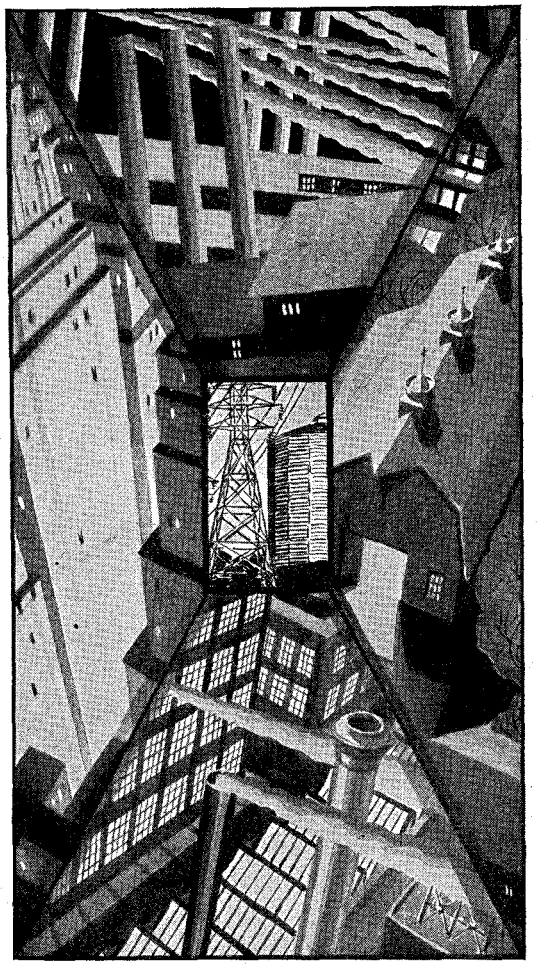

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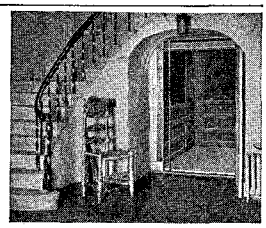

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the directors to make these accumulations earn the largest return possible.

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